



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

SAPTHAGIRI

ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

APRIL 2021 Rs 5/-



VONTIMITTA

SRI KODANDARAMASWAMI VARI BRAHMOTSAVAMS

21-04-2021 to 29-04-2021

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams

VONTIMITTA
SRI KODANDARAMASWAMIVARI
BRAHMOTSAVAMS
21-04-2021 to 29-04-2021



21-04-2021 Wednesday
Day: Dwajarohanam
Night : Seshavahanam

22-04-2021 Thursday
Day: Venuganaalamkaram
Night : Hamsavahanam

23-04-2021 Friday
Day: Vatapathrasai Alamkaram
Night : Simhavahanam

24-04-2021 Saturday
Day: Navaneethakrushnalalamkaram
Night : Hanumathseva

25-04-2021 Sunday
Day: Mohiniseva
Night : Garudaseva

26-04-2021 Monday
Day: Sivadhanurbhanalamkaram
Night : Kalyanotsavam, Gajavahanam

27-04-2021 Tuesday
Day: Rathotsavam

28-04-2021 Wednesday
Day: Kaaleeyamardhanaalamkaram
Night : Aswahanam

29-04-2021 Thursday
Day: Chakrasnanam
Night : Dwajavarohanam

BHAGAVADGITA



Hrsikesam tada vakyam
Idam aha mahipate
Senayor ubayor madhye
Ratham sthapaya me cyuta

(B.G. Chapter- I, Sloka-21)

O Lord of earth, he spoke this word to Hrusikesha
(Lord Krishna) ; Draw up my chariot between
the two armies.



INVOCATION

Brahmadhi Deva Sevyaya
Brahmanyaya Mahathmane
Janaki Prana Nadhaya
Ragu Nathaaya Mangalam

Let good happen to the Lord of the Raghu clan,
The one who is served by Lord Brahma and Devas,
The one who protected Vedas and Brahmins,
And the one who was the king of the Soul of Janaki.

(Ramamangala Stotram by Varavaramuni - 13)



APPEAL TO DEVOTEES



- ❖ Devotees should enter the temple wearing traditional dress only.
- ❖ Devotees should deposit their luggage and electronic goods at free luggage counters before entering the queue for darshan.
- ❖ The articles deposited in the luggage counters will be given to the depositor only. Other persons are not allowed.
- ❖ Please co-operate to security staff while checking the belongings.
- ❖ If you notice any suspectable persons, things, bags convey the message to the nearest security staff.
- ❖ Devotees can approach the Broadcasting department in the Asthana Mandapam opposite to Srivari temple to know about the missing person.
- ❖ Don't believe dalais, touts or mingle with strangers and because they may cheat or deceive you.
- ❖ Don't pay any amount to the staff at the time of receiving the luggage from the free luggage counters.
- ❖ Don't wear flowers in Tirumala. The flowers are meant for Lord Srinivasa.
- ❖ Drinking alcohol and containing cigarettes, guthkas and other intoxicated materials are prohibited at Tirumala and it is an illegal act.
- ❖ Don't wear foot wear in Tirumala streets. Devotees should keep their footwear at the counters.
- ❖ Free tonsuring is provided at Kalyanakatta. Devotees need not pay money for barbers.
- ❖ Physically handicapped and oldage people may utilize free battery cars available at Rambagicha Rest House near Srivari temple.
- ❖ Traveling by vehicles on ghat road should follow the road rules for safe journey.
- ❖ Please inform to the vigilance **toll free number 18004254141** immediately if any dalary demand for money or any inconvenience caused at Ghat road.





Venkatadri Samamsthanam
Brahmande nasti kinchana



Venkatesa Samo Devo
Na Bhuto na Bhavishyati

SAPTHAGIRI

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WHEELS OF TIME – A NEW BEGINNING

Time is the essence of life. It waits for none. If wealth is lost, it can be regained. If health is lost, it can be retrieved. But if time is lost, it can never be restored. Everyone has to move with the times using the available time for the benefit of the humanity. The day follows the night and the years roll by. Using the time provided by the Lord to us, we need to detach ourselves from the allure of worldly pleasures and inevitably move towards the righteous path. The life-span is not specified by the number of years but by the number of breaths we are allotted. Anger, jealousy, enmity and greed consume extra breaths, thus reducing the life-span invariably. Narayaneeyam urges us to surrender to the lotus feet of the Lord to free ourselves from the engrossments of living. We cannot stop the quick movement of time from minutes to hours to days to years. What we can do is to stop wasting this valuable God's gift and taking recourse to total surrender to Him.

In Mahabharata, Vidura explains the insurmountable nature of the time. He says that time devours all things. It kills every person born on this planet. It is awake while the entire world is asleep. He further narrates to Dhritarashtra that time digests all materialistic things and it also creates. The wise would utilize the same to the best of their ability.

Sri Adisankaracharya in Bhajagovindam says - Do not be proud of your prosperity, status or youthfulness. Time will take away all these in a fraction of a minute. We should bar all these illusions and experience the Godly state of life.

The beginning of a telugu new year according to the Hindu Calendar (Ugadi) brings in us new hopes, aspirations and we all wish that the whole universe should be peaceful; people should be happy and joyful free from all worries and diseases. This year's name is Plava, meaning wisdom and knowledge. We had passed through serious problems during the previous year, Sarvari, which means darkness among several meanings. It had created innumerable problems for the whole world.

The TTD has been organising several programmes like yagnas and holy scripture recitations every day for the welfare of the Universe and to alleviate the suffering of devotees from diseases and hunger. Let us all join to strengthen our efforts for a better healthy world this year.

We need to remind ourselves of what Charka Samhita states: it is easy to mend or cut down when the plant is tender but requires a lot of effort to uproot it when it is fully grown. So is the case with the disease. It needs to be nipped in the bud, otherwise it grows in ominous proportions and becomes incurable.

Let us all follow the health guidelines and help the humanity survive these cruel times by wearing masks, maintaining social distance and cleanliness.

The great epic Ramayana is divided into six *Kandas* (Chapters). Each of them, except Sundara Kanda, is descriptive of Lord Sri Rama and his deeds.

Balakanda deals with the birth, childhood and the wedding of Sita-Rama, **Ayodhyakanda** deals with the happenings in Ayodhya, including sending of Sita-Rama to exile, **Aranyakanda** deals with the life of the celestial couple in the forest and the abduction of Sita, **Kishkindakanda** deals with the introduction of Hanuma, meeting of Sugreeva and Rama, slaying of Vali, despatching the vanaras in different directions in search of Sita sadhvi, **Yudhakanda** deals with the war, killing of Ravana and his army and ends with the coronation of Lord Rama.

Sundara Kanda begins with Hanuman's heroic leap to Lanka, his travails on the way and at the gate of Lanka. His pounding of Ravan's army, vandalizing Ashok Vana, meeting with Sita Sadhvi, Hanuma's meeting with Ravana and setting fire to Lankapuri and finally reporting to Rama and conveying the good news about the well being of Sita Sadhvi.

Surprisingly and rightly, Rishi Valmiki called the fifth chapter **Sundara Kanda**. In the rest of the five chapters, the focal point is SRI RAMA. Several explanations are given about



this. The foremost of them are — Hanuman was fondly called 'Sundara' by his mother Anjani and Sage Valmiki chose this name over others as Sundara Kanda is about Hanuman's journey to Lanka. Some say that the whole chapter is beautiful (sundara), the forests, Lanka and the description of Hanuma etc; hence it is called **Sundara Kanda**. The most apt explanation is through the following *sloka* —

*Sundaro, Sundaro Rama, Sundaro, Sundaro katha!
 Sundare Sundari Sita, Sundare, Sundaram vanam
 Sundare sundaram kavyam, sundare sundaram kapi,
 Sundare, sundaram mantram, sundare kim na Sundaram?*

[Beautiful is the name of Rama, beautiful is the story, Sita is beautiful, the forest is beautiful. The *kavya* is beautiful, the *kapi* (Anjaneya) is beautiful, the *mantra* is beautiful and finally what is NOT beautiful?]

Also, Sundarakanda is *Upasana Kanda*; the others are not. Though the story line goes on cursorily, actually the deeper meaning is all about *upasana*. However, if one may interpret — it snugly fits in *advaita*, *dvaita*, *vishistadvaita* concepts because it is *Upasana Kanda*.



Something significant about this *kanda* is that, it begins with “*tat*” and also ends with “*tat*”. It means that the meaning of the entire *kanda* is “*tatva masi*” *Tat* means *parabrahmam*. In other words, the chapter begins with *parabrahmam* and ends with the same concept in the form of Hanuma and Sita. Hanuma could see Rama in Sita when he met her in Ashoka vana.

Almost after one year, there was a smile on the face of Sita. That itself qualifies for the name of Sundarakanda. That is why it is said that the slokas in the *kanda* have the power to mitigate the suffering of anybody. Hanuma, for that reason, concludes the chapter with the following *sloka*.

Tato mayaa vaagbhiH adiina bhaaShiNii I
 shivaabhiH iShTaabhiH abhiprasaaditaa I
 jagaama shaantim mama maithila aatmajaa I
 tava api shokena tathaa abhipiiDitaa II
 (5-68-29)

Hanuma tells Rama, “Thereafter, smoothened by me with comforting, well-disposed and agreeable words, Sita mata, though tormented with thought of your grief, obtained peace of mind.”

The *Kanda* also begins with “*Tato*” - This line is called Mantra in Parayana tradition.

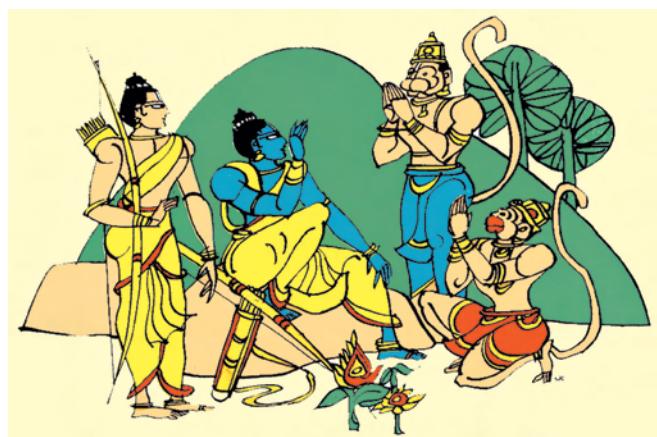
Tato raavananiitaayaah sitaayaah shatrukarshanah I
 iyeshha padamanveshtum chaaranaacharite pathi II

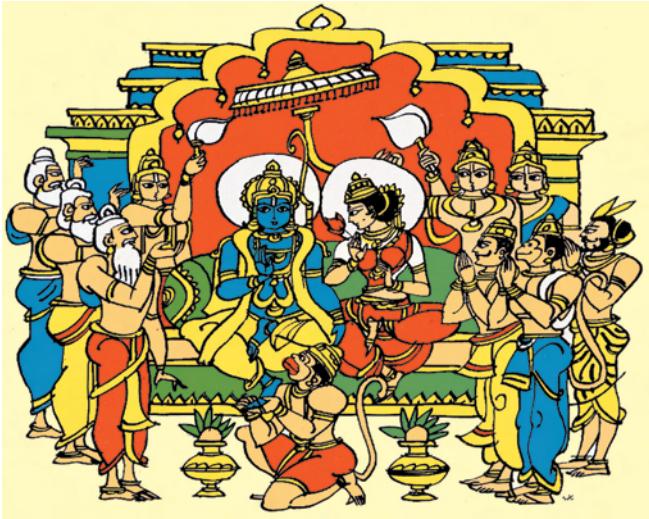
After that, Hanuma, the destroyer of foes, desired to travel in the sky where celestials like chaaranas tread, to search for Sita devi, who was abducted by Ravana. (5-1-1)

Hanuma as a Diplomat and a Warrior

In this chapter, Valmiki depicted Hanuma as a strong, yet very diplomatic. Hanuma politely declines to rest on Mainaka Mountain because he would be delayed in his work. He very tactfully enters the mouth of Surasa in a tiny form and quickly comes out. Thus, he obeys Surasa’s directive, yet saves himself from a battle and wastage of time. Yet, when it was warranted as in the case of Simhika, he fiercely killed her without wasting much time. He was addressed by Valmiki as ‘*Maha Kapi*’ [The Great Vanara] and also as *Satru Karnama* [destroyer of enemies] which means destroying internal enemies (of the body) *kama, krodha, lobha, mada, matsarya*. When Lankhini confronts him at the entrance of Lanka, he tells her that he just wants to visit the place and see around. When she hits him on the chest, he hits her back with his left hand (not to injure her gravely). He did not want to smash her out of life. It is only when Hanuma finds the real enemies that he indulged in real fight. He makes a mincemeat of the soldiers, warriors and sons of Ravana, when they attacked him. Even though he could have escaped from the effect of Brahmastra released by Indrajeet, he remained quiet, so that, he could see Ravana personally and counsel him. He introduces himself as the minister of Sugreeva, who is brother of Vali. Mentioning the name of Vali was very deliberate because Vali tormented Ravana earlier.

Valmiki’s description of picturesque Lanka through Hanuma’s words adds credence to the title of the *Kanda*.





When he reaches back and meets Rama, he conveys that Sita mata is waiting for him sadly but is fine. He also tells him that Sita Mata felt happy about the friendship of Rama and Sugriva. He did not boast of his battles in Lanka to Rama. But he narrated to the other vanaras about the details of his heroic acts in Lanka. He knows what to convey to whom.

Hanuma is devoted to his duty. He decides to undertake Prayopavesa (deeksha until death) if he can not find Sita in Lanka. Once he finds her, he carefully gives his introduction by singing in praise of Rama and presents Rama's ring and in return collects her chudamani (head piece) to show to his lord as proof of meeting her. He tells Sita Mata that all the warriors in Sugreeva army are as good as he and some are even better. Thus, Hanuma exhibits his humble attitude.

In the final sloka, Hanuman very diplomatically tells Rama, that Sita Mata has been pacified by him. But she is pained as Rama is grieving for her. This is the diplomatic expression of telling not to grieve any more.

Prayer to Hanuman

Sita Sadhvi having realized the capability of Hanuma makes a fervent appeal to him to ensure that she is taken away by Rama, her lord which is reflected in the following sloka. Many people chant this 108 times a day for a period of 40 days to fulfil their wish.

“Tvamasmin Kaarya Niryoge
Pramaanam Harisattama
Hanuman Yatnamaastaaya
Dukhaha Kshaya Karobhava”

“Hanuma, please get on to my work for sure. Please begin the effort and mitigate the misery”.

Finally, the Kanda belongs to Hanuma and his heroic deeds. He destroyed Ashok Vana, much endeared by Ravana, killed his soldiers, warriors and even his sons. He went up to the court of Ravana and warned him, which angers Ravana. Thus, Hanuma fires the first salvo of Rama's army and sets the ball rolling for the great war to come. Setting fire to Lankapuri is symbolic of forthcoming destruction of Ravana's empire.

Benefits of Reading Sundarakanda

- It can be chanted anytime in the morning or evening according to one's convenience.
- Reciting Sundarkanda can help ward off evils. It removes all the negativity and obstacles from one's life and bestows the person with happiness and prosperity.
- It protects oneself against diseases and ensures good health.
- Those who listen to Sundarakanda will have spiritual advancement. Those who are not married get married. Issueless get children. All gods will be pleased.

At the end of the parayana if you recite this sloka, you get *sampoorna phala* (complete result):

***Yatra yatra Raghunatha Kirtanam
Tatra tatra kritha mastakanjalim
Bhaspavaan paripurna lochanam
Marutim namata rakshasanthakam***

Wherever or whenever the praise of Lord Rama is sung, invariably Maruti, the destroyer of demons, appears there with folded hands and bowed head, with tears welling out of his eyes.





Introduction to

Part - 1

Tirumala Ozhugu

History of Rituals and Customs in Tirumala

Original in Tamil by- Sri K. Balasundar Nayakar
Excerpts Translated into English by- Dr. M. Varadarajan

Tirumala Ozhugu is a tamil word which explains the rituals and customs propagated by Sri Ramanujacharya. In English it is called Tirumala Olugu.

Tirumalai Ozhugu, is an authoritative treatise which narrates the history of rituals and customs that were in existence during pre-Ramanuja period, besides Sri Ramanuja's contribution to Tirumala during his life time and further development till the end of Manavala Mamunigal's period, i.e. 15th century.

This book was edited by Sri K. Balasundara Nayakar, M.A., a great Tamil Scholar in Sri Venkateswara Oriental Research Institute, TTD with the help of its scholars Sri U.Ve.Kachchikidambi Yamunacharya Swami and Sri U.Ve.T.A.Krishnamacharya Swami and published by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams in 1953.

A small introduction was written by the editor during its publication in 1953. He says that this book author's name is not available. And there is a mention about the H.H. Jeeyar's year upto 1544 only, and hence he assumes that this must have been written in the middle of 16th century.

Before writing the main part of the book, an extensive introduction is given by the Editor in this book on 10.12.1953. I am giving below the

excerpts of the introduction for the benefit of the readers.

Tirumalai Ozhugu is the *magnum opus* which elaborates the rituals and customs as codified in the Vedas, Agamas, Upanishads and introducing new customs according to the doctrine of Sri Vaishnava religion as propagated by Sri Ramanuja. The editor also succinctly gives the inscriptions existing in establishing the rituals in Tirumala.

First Visit

It is said that Sri Ramanuja visited Tirumala three times during his life time. During his first visit, he came to Tirupati to learn Sri Ramayana from his uncle Acharya Periya Tirumala Nambi. At that time he was staying at the foot of the Hill. Alwars never visited Tirumala as they felt stepping on the Hill would defile it and hence sang songs from the foot of the hill. Having known this, Sri Ramanuja did not step up on the hill and everyday Tirumala Nambi came down and taught Sri Ramayana to Sri Ramanuja at the foot of the Hill.

Second Visit

There was a dispute between Saivites and Vaishnavites about the deity Tiruvenkatamudayan as they considered Him as their own deity. At that time, Sri Ramanuja visited second time and established Tiruvenkatamudayan as Vishnu by adorning Conch and Chakra in His hands besides making some improvements in Tirumala. At that time, he did *upavasa* for three days by not taking anything and purifying his body, then walking up the Hill and after finishing work, he came down to Tirupati.

There is hearsay, that Sri Ramanuja climbed up the hill on his knees without stepping on it with his feet. In the middle, at one place, his knees got fractured. At that time, Tiruvenkatamudayan (Lord) came to him in human form and helped him to climb up the Hill and then disappeared. Hence, that place is still called *Muzhankal Murichchan*. During this period only, Sri Ramanuja consecrated Lord Govindaraja Swami in Tirupati and developed the temple.

Third visit

During his third visit, he went up the Hill and shouldered the responsibility of introducing several *kainkaryas* besides establishing a Mutt opposite to the Hanuman temple in Tirumala. Sri Ramanuja was the first H. H. Periya Jeeyar from 1052 to 1053 and appointed four Ekangis to serve the Lord. He went back to Tiruvarangam.

It was King Kattiyam Yadavarayan who was responsible for helping Sri Ramanuja for his remodeling of Tirumala and Tirupati. He was vassal of Chola King. He ruled his part with Narayanavanam as his Capital. Having known the greatness of Sri Ramanuja, he became his disciple. It is known from the inscriptions that he lived in the beginning of 12th century.

It is said that King Yadavaraya was ruling the Tiruvenkata Nadu when Sri Ramanuja consecrated the Conch and Chakra to Tiruvenkatamudayan. Some people consider that the King must be predecessor to Kattiyam Yadavaraya. Some say that he is Kattiyam Yadavaraya himself.

During the 11th century, Saivites took the advantage of calling Tiruvenkatamudayan as Subramanya. Even when there was no conch and chakra in the hands of Tiruvenkatamudayan, and there was no dispute, all sects considered Him as Tirumal (Vishnu). In such a case, why was there a controversy during the period of Sri Ramanuja? To answer this doubt, it is said that the King gave



punishments to Vaikhanasa Archakas. So they dispensed with doing rituals in the temple. At that time, Saivites took advantage. King Kuloththunga Chola being a staunch Saivite, degraded other beliefs and started harassing the people of other faiths and beliefs. Further, he encouraged interest in saiva faith. Hence, Saivites in Kalahasti felt that they had support of King and propagated that Tiruvenkatumudayan as Murugan in the form of one doing penance, and so, one without weapons in His hand.

Sri Ramanuja established that the divine idol was none other than Tiruvenkatumudayan at Tirumala and closed this case. It is said that, Murugan did penance on the banks of Kumaradhara river. Even staunch devotee of Murugan, Arunagiri Nathar sang a song on Tiruvenkatumudayan in his text Tiruppugazh (Tiruvanzh.Tiru.175).

The King Kattiyam Yadhava Narayanan is also called KattiDevan. He became a disciple of Sri Ramanuja and changed his name as Yadhava Narayanan. He assisted Sri Ramanuja in developing temples both at Tirumala and Tirupati. He took pride in following his Acharya's order.

Sri Ramanua initiated several new rituals, built new temples and consecrated deities. The following are a few among them:

1. Adorning Tiruvenkatumudayan with Conch and Chakra.
2. Consecrating deities – Varaha, Narasimha, Venkatesa in Ananda Vimana of Tiruvenkatumudayan according to Vaikhanasa Agama. By doing so he established that this temple is as a Vishnu temple and did Samprokshanam.
3. Consecrating the images of Tirumarbh Nachchiyar with two hands in the chest of Lord.
4. The recitation of Nachchiyar Tirumozhi of Andal during Abhishekam.

5. Applying camphor powder Tiruman for 3 days and pearl powder for 4 days on the divine face of the Lord as Tirumani.
6. Laying of the four Mada streets around the temple facilitating conduct of Brahmotsavam.
7. Installing MalaiKuniya Nindra Perumal as Utsava Murthi and Venkataththuraivar as Kauthukamurthy.
8. Initiating the festival of welcoming the holy water during adhyayana festival.
9. Establishing Sri Narasimha Murty from the temple north of Swami Pushkarini to a shrine to the north east of Anandha vimana.
10. Decorating Nagabharana to the arm of the Lord.
11. Command of Sri Ramanuja to be followed by the people in Tirumala.
12. Consecrating a Yantra with Mantra in the temple (to enrich day-to-day Isvaryam of Tiruvenkatumudayan).
13. Consecrating Govindarajaswami in Sri Parthasarathy Swami Temple in Tirupati.
14. Consecrating Andal with purple Indian water lily flower in the hand on the right side of Sri Govindarajaswami.
15. Festivals for both deities arranged.
16. With the help of Kattiyam Yadhavarayan, he constructed Mandapam, Gopuram etc.
17. Establishing the identity of two deities as one and the same and celebrated the festivals of the two deities in a grand manner at different periods in the year.
18. Sri Govindarajaswami in the reclining pose originally gave darsan to all devotees in Chitrakuta, Chidambaram. Kulothunga -I threw away this deity into the sea. Further, he harassed Srivaishnavites. It is said at the fag end of his life, he suffered from rajapilava and died. Hence, he was called Kirumikandan.

(to be continued)



SRI KODANDARAMA TEMPLE MADURANTAKAM

- Smt. Chitra

(Lord Vishnu), flanked by Goddesses Sridevi and Bhudevi, believed to have been worshipped by God Rama. All the deities in the main sanctum, including Sri Sudarsana are enshrined under the Pushpaka Vimana. An inner enclosure (prakaram) with a raised pillared veranda runs around the main sanctum.

An interesting story

One of the most important and famous Sri Rama temples in Tamil Nadu is in Madurantakam, a small town in Chengalpattu district, Tamil Nadu. Officially known as Sri Kodandarama temple, it is popularly called Eri Katha Rama temple. This ancient place was originally known as Madurantaka Chaturvedimangalam as the Chola emperor Madurantaka Uttama Chola (973-985 A.D.), the son of Gandaraditya Chola donated this village to scholars of the four Vedas (Chaturvedins) who lived here.

The principal deities (moola-vigrahas) enshrined in the main sanctum of this east-facing temple are of Sri Kodandarama (Eri Katha Rama), Lakshmana and Sita. These huge deities are made of stucco (sudhai in Tamil). In Tamil Nadu, there are many temples wherein the main deities are made of stucco such as the famous Lord Ranganatha Swami temple in Srirangam and also Lord Vishnu enshrined in the Yathoktakari, Pandava Doota and Ulagalanda Perumal temples in Kanchipuram. In the temple at Madhurantakam, Rama and Lakshmana are seen holding their respective bows in their left hands and Sita stands to Rama's right. The processional deity (utsava-bhera) of Lord Rama in this temple is also worshipped as 'Eri Katha Rama'. Here we can see, Karunakara Perumal

In the outer open prakaram, are situated a number of sub-shrines of which the most important one is for Maa Sita, worshipped here as Janakavalli. This sanctum, which faces east and has an inner prakaram and a pillared mandapa in front, was constructed in 1798. An interesting detail about this sanctum is that it was constructed on the orders of Colonel Lionel Place, who was then the Collector of Chengalpattu. The story of how an English official came to be associated with this temple is truly fascinating. In Madhurantakam, close to this temple is a large irrigation tank. Whenever it rained heavily, the breaches in this tank led to the flood waters damaging the crops in the village. During 1795-1798, the Collector of Chengalpattu decided to rectify the situation and in 1798, he stayed in Madurantakam during the rainy months

In this temple, Lord Rama and Lakshmana are seen holding their respective bows in their left hands and Sita Devi stands to Rama's right. Here Swami is called 'Eri Katha Rama'.

with his engineers. He came to see the temple and saw lots of stones inside. On enquiring why they were there, the people there said that they were for constructing a separate sanctum for Sita but unfortunately were unable to complete it as the crops had been damaged due to floods and they could not donate to this noble cause. The Collector then said that if God Rama would prevent the breaches in the irrigation tank, he himself would construct the shrine for Sita. On the following days, there was a heavy rainfall in the area. The Collector, wanting to see if the arrangements for preventing the breaches were intact, walked near the bund of the irrigation tank when he saw two Divine Beings with bows and arrows guarding the bund. At once, he knelt down and prayed to Rama and later said that he had a vision of Rama and Lakshmana. The tank did not breach that year and the crops were saved. Colonel Place immediately kept his promise and made the necessary arrangements for building the shrine for Goddess Sita (Janakavalli). There is a Tamil epigraph which mentions that Colonel Lionel Place

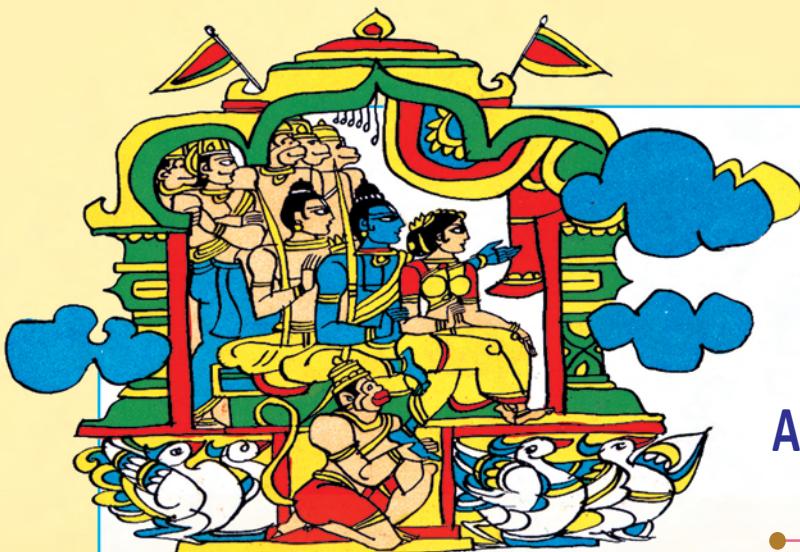
built this shrine. There is a sanctum for Andal Devi and opposite it is one for Sri Vishvaksena.

Near the entrance to the temple is a sanctum enshrining a stone image of Sudarsana (personification of the discus of Lord Vishnu) in His pose of moving forward with God Narasimha on the reverse side. Situated nearby are shrines for the Alwars and Sri Vedanta Desika. There is also a sanctum for Sri Lakshmi Narasimha with a circumambulatory path (pradakshina patha) in this temple. At the entrance to the temple is a tall five-storeyed gopuram. The sacred tank (pushkarini) of this temple is called Sri Rama Tirtham and Sri Ramanuja Tatakam. On the banks of this tank is a shrine for Anjaneya Swamy, facing the main temple.

Ramanujacharya's connection with Madhurantakam : There are many Vishnu temples in Tamil Nadu which are connected to the life of Ramanujacharya. This temple in Madhurantakam is one such, and is connected with an important milestone event in his life. Yamunacharya (Alavandar), a famous Srivaishnava Acharya, wanted Ramanuja to come to Srirangam to spread and establish the Srivaishnava tradition (sampradaya). Periya Nambi (also known as Maha Purna), Yamunacharya's disciple started from Srirangam to go to Kanchipuram to meet Ramanuja. Ramanuja was also anxious to meet Periya Nambi, and decided to go to Srirangam. The important and historic meeting between Ramanuja and Periya Nambi took place at Madurantakam. There is a small four-pillared mandapa to the rear of the Andal shrine is the place under the Magizha tree where Sri Ramanuja was given Pancha Samskara (Samashrayanam) by his teacher (Acharya), Periya Nambi. Shrines for Udayavar (Ramanuja) and Periya Nambi are seen near the Vishvaksena shrine.

Festivals: The most important festival in this temple is the Rama Navami Utsavam.





ANCIENT INDIAN AERONAUTICS

- Prof. Rani Sadasiva Murty

The word Vimana is a much heard one in Ancient Indian Disciplines of learning. Even for a common man the word Vimana is mark of special interest. It is mainly found in two Sastras. 1. In ancient Indian Temple Architecture and 2. In the science of Ancient Indian Aeronautics.

In Indian Temple Architecture, Vimana is one which has no pair or comparison for it 'Vigatham maanam upam asya ithi'. Mainly in every temple, the main structure around and over the sanctum sanctorum is called Vimana. Usually this is constructed with one to sixteen storeys. A single storeyed one is called 'Yekathalavimanam'. Similarly, there are 'dvi-tala', 'tri-tala', 'chatus-tala', 'pancha-tala' and so on. The 'sata-tala' Vimana is popularly known as 'Sarvabhauma Vimana'. In different parts of the country, the Vimana is constructed in different ways with or without embellished carvings and sculpture over it. Vimana is the main place of worship for all devotees situated in the innermost compound wall.

Now a little about the second meaning of the word Vimana 've pakshinaha maanmiva maanam gagane yasya thath vimanam'. The word 'Vihi' means a bird, the speed and movement of which is equal to that of a bird while moving in the sky. Thus any aerial-flying vehicle of ancient times is called Vimana.

In many pauranic texts, there is frequent reference to these flying vehicles. Even in the Kumara Sambhava there is reference to many Vimana-s (aerial vehicles) of different Gods and demi-gods.

Pushpaka Vimana

The most popular one in Ancient Indian Literature is Pushpaka Vimana. This

is mentioned in the Valmiki's Ramayana. Originally this was the aerial vehicle of Kubera, the ruler of Yakshas and it was forcibly grabbed by the king of demons, Ravana. The special feature of this Vimana is that there is always room in it to accommodate a person even after it is filled to its capacity.

After slaying Ravana, Lord Rama used it to go back from Ravana's Lanka to Ayodhya. Even after that, the Pushpaka Vimana was under the possession of Sri Rama for some time during his rule.

In the present attempt light is being thrown on the science of ancient Indian Aeronautics to the available extent.

Aeronautics is one of the most ancient subjects vividly dealt within our ancient Indian scriptures. The major available references to this science are mainly three in number as mentioned below:

1. Rigvedic References to Aerial Cars
2. Bharadwaja's Magnum Opus 'BrhadyantraSarsva'
3. A Reference to an Aeroplane in Samarangana Sutradhara of Bhoja



1. Rigvedic References to Aerial Cars

Rigveda deals with many astonishing subjects to the modern age. To explore into the volumes of those Vedic texts, keen approach is necessary. When a curious attempt is made one can get references to the following seven types of Aerial Cars in the Rigveda. Let us take a glance at the details:

a. *Pravovayumrathayujamkrunudhvam* -Rv. 5.41-6

Let the air be employed for the movement of the vehicle. Here the air is recommended to be the fuel of the vehicle.

b. *Tam triprushthetribandhure rathe*

yunjantiyatave....rshiinaamsaptadiitibhih. – Rv. 9.62.17

The seven Divine Seers using their wisdom employed the air as fuel for running the Three sided and Three - storeyed Vehicle.

c. *Sahotaamandrovidathaanyasthaa*

*tsatyoyajvaakavitamahsavedh
aahvidutrathahsahasasputroag*

nihsochishkesahpruthivypampajoasret. Rv. 3.14.1.

He is the right performer of the sacrifice, he is the abode of the knowledge and he is the intellectual who has extraordianarily creative intelligence and who with his all-excelling strength becomes the ruler possessing the brilliance of the Fire god and dwells on the Earth with his Electrical vehicle.

d. *Asvinorasanamrathamanasvamaajiniivataoh.*

Tenaahambhuuricaakana. Rv. 1.120.10.

Those who are mighty do possess a Vehicle that can move here and there even without having any horses joined to it. I shine greatly with such a vehicle.

e. *Pari praasishyadatkavihsindhuruurmavadhisritah.*

Karam bibharatpuruspruham. Rv. 9.144.1.

A person with a vision of three times moves in such a vehicle named KAAR that can move on the surface of the waves of the river or ocean.

*Anasvojaatoanabhiisurukthyorathastri
chakrahpavartate rajah.*

*Mahattadvodevyasyapravacanam
dyamrubhavaahprithiviim yacca pushyathah.*

A Three-wheeler Vehicle without any horses and with an unobstructed movement in the aerial path deserves to be appreciated much.

f. *Yaastepuushannaavoantah
samudrehiranmayiirantari kshecharanti.
Taabhiryaa sidutyaaam
suryasakaam enakrutasrvaicchamaanah.* Rv.6.58.3.

O Pushan! Your chariot made of various metals is capable of moving in the under waters of the sea and also in the aerial path. You are at will to move in that vehicle having become the messenger of the Sun.

g. *Somaapushanaaarajaso*

vimanamsaptachak ramrathamavisvaminvam.

- Rv. 2.40.3.

This vehicle with seven wheels can be driven with the power (fuel) obtained from the Moon and the Pushan.

Several other citations from the Rigveda give plenty of information about the airplanes and other sort of vehicles with movement in all the three paths - in the air, in the waters and on the earth. These instances show that the ancient Vedic Seers had at their command a highly developed science in building various Aerial Cars.

2. Bharadvaja's Magnum Opus 'BrhadyantraSarsva'

From the available sources the sage *Bharadvaja*, one of the Seven Celestial Sages and the son of Brhaspati is known to have written a text named "BrhadyantraSarsva". This text consists of Ninety Six Prakaranas. Of these, the fortieth Prakarana is called 'Vaimanikadhikaranam'. It is also known by the name 'BrhadvimanaSastra'. There are 500 Sutras in this Vaimanikadhikarana . Out of these 500 Sutras the first fourteen (14) Sutras of the first chapter and twenty two (22) stray Sutras from the rest of the chapters of scattered sources are available in text form. Over these thirty seven (37) Sutras a monk named *BhodhanandaYati* wrote a commentary in 3014 slokas. This text in its presently available form is very much informative with regard to the knowledge of aeronautics in ancient India.

At present, this text is available in two recensions. Of these two recensions, one is from south India published by the name "VYMAANIKA SHAASTRA – AERONAUTICS by Maharshi Bharadwaja (Propounded by Venerable Subbaraya Sastry and translated into English and Edited, Printed and Published by G.R.JOSYER of

The Main structure around and over
the Sanctum Sanctorum in every
temple is called "Vimana"

Mysore). The other one is from North India published by the name MAHARSHI BHARADWAAJAPRANITA BRHADVIMANA SASTRAM (Translated into Hindi and edited by Swami Brahma Muni Parivrajak of Gurukulkangadi, Haridvar). In the available South Indian edition there are Sixteen Adhikaranas and the descriptions of four types of Ancient Aeroplanes viz. *Sakuna Vimana*, *Sundara Vimana*, *Rukma Vimana* and *Tripura Vimana*. The names of the sixteen Adhikaranas are – Yantraadhikarana, Margaadhikarana, Avartaadhikarana, Angaadhikarana, Vastraadhikarana, Aharaadhikarana, Lohaadhikarana, Lohasuddhyadhikarana, Ushmapaadadhikarana, Mushadhdhikaranoa, Kundaadhikarana, Bhastradhikarana, Darpanadhikarana, Saktyadhikarana, Yantradhikarana and Jatyadadhikarana. Besides these descriptions there are the imaginary sketches of the above said four types of Vimanas in this edition.

Some Ancient Treatises mentioned in the Brhadvimana Sastra:

1. Kriyasara, 2. Yantrasarvasva of Bharadvaja, 3. Saunakiya of Saunaka, 4. Lohatantra, 5. Darpanaprakarana, 6. Vimanachandrika of Narayana, 7. Vyomayanatantra of Saunaka, 8. Yantrakalpa of Garga, 9. Vyomayanaarkaprakasa of Vacaspati, 10. Khetayanapradipika of Chaakraayani, 11. Yaanabindu of Dundinaatha, 12. Manibhadrakaarika, 13. Lohaprakaranam, 14. Saktitantram, 15. Darpanasastra, 16. Lohasarvasvam, 17. Dhaatusarvasva of Bhodhayana, 18. SamskaaraRatnaakara, 19. Maniprakarana, 20. Sabdamahodadhi, 21. Patalkalpa, 22. Yantraprakarana, 23. Agatattvalahari of Aasvalaayana, 24. Patapradipika, 25. Chaaranibandhanagrantha, 26. Saktisarva, 27. Rutukalpa, 28. Varnasarsva, 29. Muulaarkaprakaasika, 30. Kshiriipatakalpa, 31. Sananiryasa Chandrika, 32. Naalikaanirnaya, 33. Manikalpapradipika, 34. Brhatkandam, 35. Pattikanibandhanam, 36. Khetavilasagrantha, 37. Parthivapakakalpa, 38. Udbhijjatattvasarayananam, 39. Gatinirnayaadhyaya, 40. Lohatattvaprakarana, 41. Saudaminikala of Isvara, 42. Sabdanibandhanam, 43. Niryasakalpa, 44. Naamaarthakalpasutra of Atri, 45. Sarvasabdanibandhana, 46. Khetasarvasva, 47. Draavakaprakarana, 48. Khetayantra, 49. Loharatnaakara, 50. Nirnayaadhdhikara, 51. Muushakalpa, 52. Kundakalpa, 53. Kundanirnaya, 54. Bhastrikaanibandhana, 55. Mukurakalpa, 56. Darpaanakaalpa, 57. Paraankusa, 58. Sammohakoriyakoanda, 59. Amsubodhini, 60. Prapanchasara, 61. Saktibija, 62. Saktikaustubha, 63. Yantrakalpataru of Lalla, 64. Maniratnaakara, 65. PatasamskaaraRatnaakara, 66. Vishayaniirnayaadhdhikara, 67. Asanakalpa, 68. Paakasarvasva, 69. Lohaadhikarana, 70.

Bodhaanandakarikaa of Bodhaananda, 71. Loharhasyam, 72. Paribhaashaa Chandrika, 73. Visvambharakaarika of Visvambhara, 74. Samskaaradarpansa, 75. Pralayapatala, 76. Shadgarbhaviveka, 77. Raghudaya, 78. Saktissutra of Agastya, 79. Sudhavidyaakalaapa oof Aasvalaayana, 80. Brahmadasara of Vyasa, 81. Aumsumattantra of Bharadvaaja, 82. Chandahkaustubha of Paraasara, 83. Kaumudi of Simhakotha, 84. Rupasaktiprapkarana of Angiras, 85. Karakaprakarana, 86. Aakaasatantra of Bharadvaja, 87. Lokasangraha of Visarana, 88. Prapanchalahari of Vasistha, 89. Jivasarsva of Jaimini, 90. Karmaabdhipaara of Apastambha, 91. Rkhrdaya of Atri, 92. Vaayutattvaprakarana of Saakataayana, 93. Vaisvaanaratatantra of Naarada, 94. Dhumaprakarana of Naarada, 95. Oshadhipalpa of Atri, 96. VaalmikiGanita of Valmiki and 97. Lohasastra of Saakataayana.

Reference to certain Acharyas (Preceptors) in Vaimaanika Prakarana

1. Naaraayana Muni, 2. Saunaka, 3. Garga, 4. Vaacaspati, 5. Caakrayani, 6. Dundinaatha, 7. Visvanaatha, 8. Gautama, 9. Lalla, 10. Visvambhara, 11. Agastya, 12. Budila, 13. Gobhila, 14. Saakataayana, 15. Atri, 16. Kapardi, 17. Gaalava, 18. Agnimitra, 19. Vaataapa, 20. Saamba, 21. Bodhaananda, 22. Bharadvaja, 23. Siddhanaatha, 24. Isvara, 25. Aasvalaayana, 26. Vyaasa, 27. Parasara, 28. Simhakotha, 29. Angiraa, 30. Visarana, 31. Vasishtha, 32. Jaimini, 33. Apastambha, 34. Baudhayana, 35. Naarada and 36. Vaalmiki.

3. A Reference to an Aeroplane in SamaranganaSutradhara of Bhoja

*LaghudaarumayamMahaavihangam,
Drdhaslishtatanumvidhaayatasya,
Udarerasayantramaadadiita;
jvalanaadhaaramathaasyachaagnipurnam
TatraarudhahPuurus hastasya
pakshadvandyoccoaalaproojjhitenannilena,
Suptasyantahpaaradasyasasaktya,
sabdamkurvannamvareyaatiduoram.*

Samaranganasutradhara-31st Chapter, Sl.95 and 98.

A bird should be made with light-weight wood. All its joints should be fixed intact. In its womb a vessel with mercury should be arranged. Under that a vessel with fire should be placed. If any person mounts on the back of such bird, it will take the rider to a very long distance in the sky producing some sound and swimming against the waves of wind with its wings.

These are some of the ancient Indian Aeronautic systems found in our sastras.





ALVARs ON LORD VENKATESWARA - 1



THE ORIGINATING SPRING – POYGAI

- Smt. Prema Nandakumar

Sapthagiri brings to its readers a serial on the Tamil hymns sung by the Alvars which are part of the sacred book, *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*. The ten Alvars who have sung about Lord Venkateswara are Poygai, Bhutath, Pey, Tirumazhisai, Nammalvar, Kulasekhara, Perialvar, Tiruppan, Tirumangai and Andal. Written in astonishingly simple language, these song-offerings of the Alvars to Venkateswara must form part of every one's devotional life. Lord Venkateswara and Tirumala become our everyday experience by studying the hymns with care and devotion.

The Tamil word 'Alvar' means "one who remains immersed". Alvars were devotees who were totally immersed in bhakti for the Supreme, Narayana. The Alvars who have contributed rightly to the Sri Vaishnava scripture, *Nalayira Divya Prabhandham*, are twelve in number. According to the renowned scholar and historian Raghava Iyengar, they are believed to have lived between 6th and 8th century B.C. He has written so in his book, *Alvarkal Kala Nilai*, after extensive research. From that time onwards the devotional movement has spread all over India and beyond and is very active till today.

The Bhakti tradition of South India records how this hymnology arose. Three pilgrims had come to worship in the ancient temple of Trivikrama at Tirukoilur. They were caught in heavy rain and took shelter in an empty room. It was pitch dark inside. Suddenly they felt someone was pressing against them. Was it a divine presence? One of them, Poygai, began to sing:

*"With the world as the cup, the sea as ghee,
The sun as the lighted wick,
I have strung a garland of words in praise
Of the Lord who holds the flaming discus
To gain release from the ocean of misery."*

Bhutath, another of the pilgrims, had the idea of seeking the light within us to lead out of the surrounding darkness. He sang:

*"With love as the cup, aspiration as ghee,
A ceaselessly joy-filled thought as the lighted wick,
I have lit the flame of knowledge to Narayana,
By means of the revelatory Tamil language."*

Even as the pilgrims felt a harmonious blending of the external and internal worlds in these verses, the third of the trio - Pey - described their vision in clear terms, a two-in-one Presence of Lakshmi and Narayana:

*"I have seen the Mother, the golden image!
I have envisioned the sun-like splendour too.
The battle-ready and fire-red discus golden,
And the whorled conch. All these did I see
In the person of my Ocean-hued Lord."*

The Bhakti Age had begun! The three would be renowned as Poygai Alvar, Bhutathalvar and Peyalvar.

The Nalayira Divya Prabhandham contains all the verses sung by twelve Alvars on the Supreme which mention 106 temples dedicated to the Supreme as Narayana built on earth. Of the twelve Alvars, ten have sung about Lord Venkateswara. Among them, Poygai Alvar takes the lead with his ten lovely hymns in his Mudhal Tiruvanthathi that has one hundred verses. He was born in Tiruvehkhha near Kanchipuram in a pond of golden lotuses. The Lord here is known as Sonna Vannam Seytha Perumal (Yathokthakari) underlining the readiness of the Lord to accede to the wishes of his true devotee.

When writing about Lord Venkateswara on Tirumala Hill, the Alvar is overwhelmed by the total faith the devotees have for the Lord, and the sight of their worship which glistens with faith keeps Poygai amazed. Such intense bhakti!

*"Ceaselessly meditating upon the
Tulsi-garlanded Lord,
The devotees think of Him
constantly in faultless ways;
Venkatam puts out the light of karma
and renders them free;
The holy hill also acts as the flame
that inspires the gods above."*

(Verse 26. Translations from Mudhal Tiruvanthathi as also the verses by Bhutattalvar and Pey Alvar are by Prema Nandakumar)

The Alvar perceives the Venkata mountain as a divine glow, destroying evil and inspiring the devotees. As Poygai watches the Mountain with delight, he finds a togetherness of man and nature in worshipping God. Verses 37, 38 and 40 are a running commentary on what happens atop the Venkata mountain as Poygai watches the scene. Great scholars well-versed in scriptures come from all directions with lamps, incense and pure water to worship the Lord who blows the Panchajanya conch. The Alvar notes that even celestials come down to worship the Lord. And now emerges a lovely scene that underlines the poetic élan of Poygai Alvar. Here even gypsies are rich enough to throw priceless gemstones at elephants coming near the fields; mistaking the gems for lightning, the frightened snakes that are on the ground creep into their holes. Such scenes in the hymns of the Alvars show they were able to see the Divine's play in the nature around and through their rasaanubhava were able to get the devotees into the soulful atmosphere of bhakti. The Alvar also watches some gypsies strike flaming arrows at the wild elephants to scare them away from the fields.

In the 39th verse, Poygai Alvar marvels at the ways of the Lord. As Varahamurti, he had rescued Mother Earth; as Krishna he had lifted up the Govardhan Hill to guard the cowherd clan; he had destroyed evil Kamsa in a trice; and he reclines on

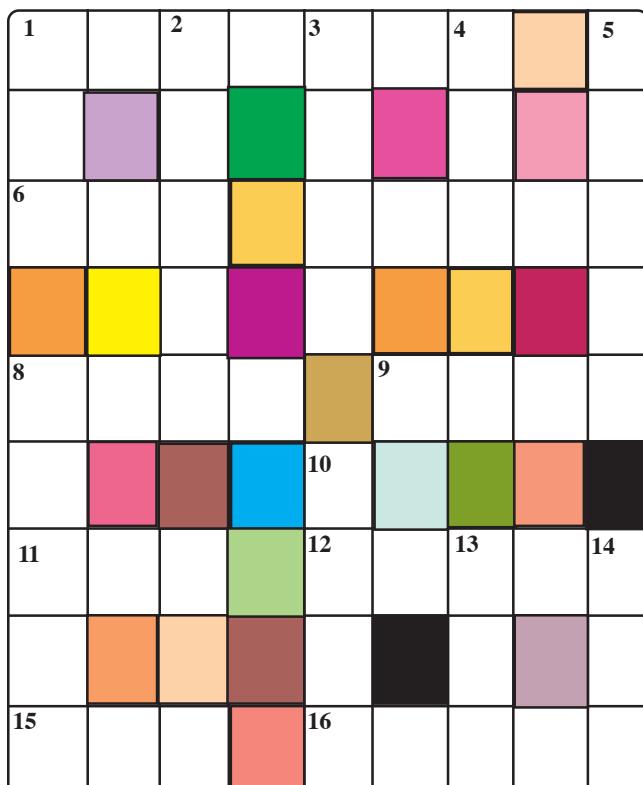
the wave-tossed ocean. Who can enumerate the greatness of the Lord ceaselessly engaged in guarding us all, standing on the Venkata Hill, marvels Poygai (verse 68). Further on, we get the assurance that though the people well-versed in Vedic scriptures are received in His presence, all those who pray to the Lord of Venkata hill with unalloyed love also are granted space in Vaikunta by the Lord who measured the earth in three strides. In the following hymn, Poygai describes the Lord's various postures in different holy temples. He stands in Venkatam, sits in Vaikuntam, reclines in Tiruvehka and steps forward as Trivikrama in Tirukoilur. We are assured that even repeating these words will

put an end to our sufferings. While the 82nd verse of Mudhal Tiruvanthathi is yet another beautiful scene of damsels going to worship Venkateswara on Dvadasi day with flower garlands and incense, the penultimate verse (99) which is a golden assurance to us all. The Lord of Venkatam Hill is very much here with us!

*"My heart! He is here. The noble Lord
Exists in the heart always;
He is found in the heart of devotees
Who meditate upon Him; Remember,
The one in the milky ocean and Venkatam
Is always in our heart."*

(to be continued)

PUZZLE



Presented by
Sri T.S. Jagan Mohan

CLUES FOR PUZZLE

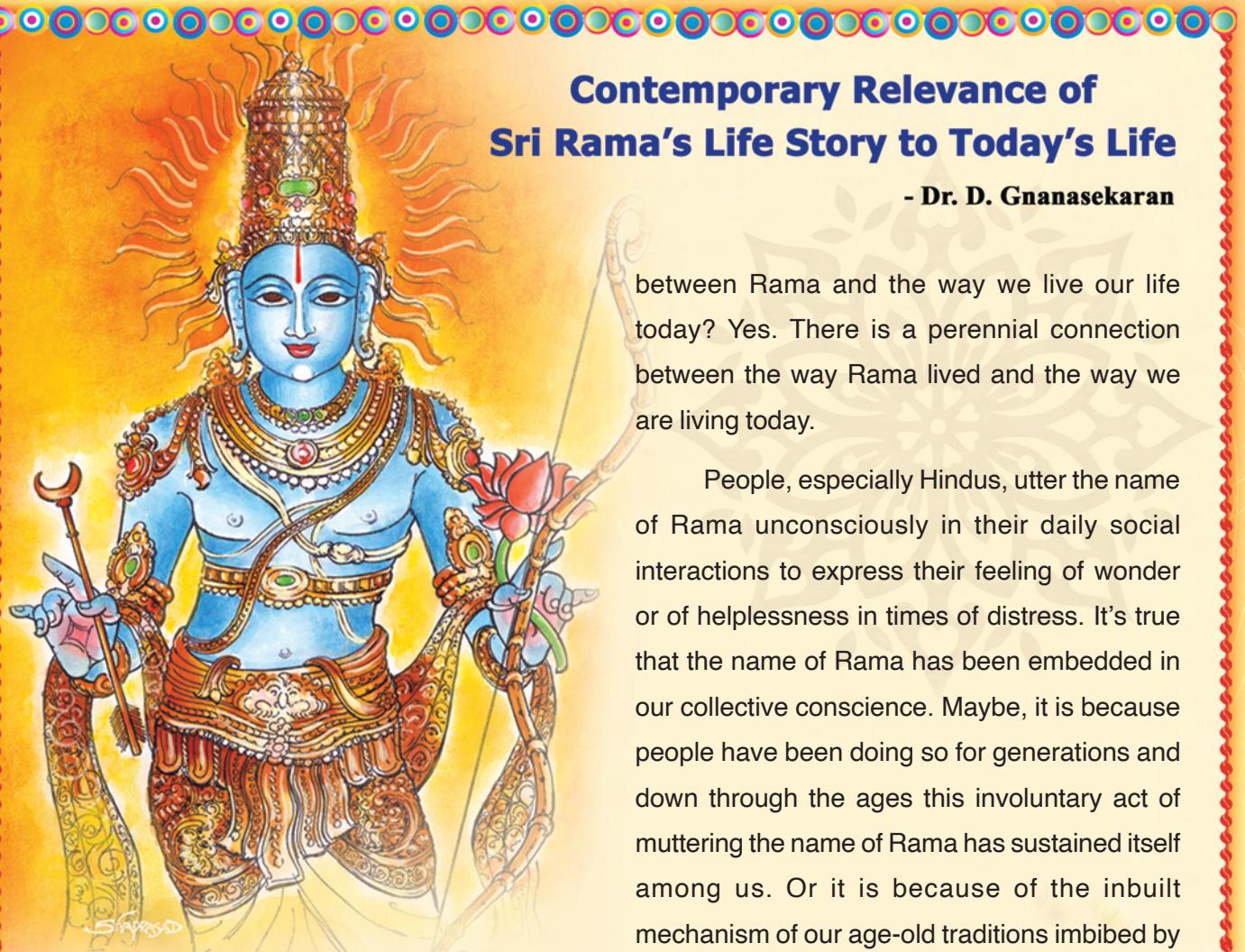
01. Strike (3)
02. Fast (5)
03. Wife of Maya (4)
04. Intention (3)
05. Minister of Sugreeva (5)
08. Puroorava (5)
10. Lord Vishnu (4)
13. Keep Secret (3)
14. Wheel of Lord Sudarshana
(down to up)(3)

DOWN

01. Grand daughter of Lord Surya (7)
06. Highest part (3)
07. Not woman (3)
08. Goddess Lakshmi (4)
09. Manmadha (4)
11. Last part (3)
12. Father of Lord Chandra (5)
15. At once (3)
16. Husband of sachidevi (5)

ACROSS

7



Contemporary Relevance of Sri Rama's Life Story to Today's Life

- Dr. D. Gnanasekaran

between Rama and the way we live our life today? Yes. There is a perennial connection between the way Rama lived and the way we are living today.

People, especially Hindus, utter the name of Rama unconsciously in their daily social interactions to express their feeling of wonder or of helplessness in times of distress. It's true that the name of Rama has been embedded in our collective conscience. Maybe, it is because people have been doing so for generations and down through the ages this involuntary act of muttering the name of Rama has sustained itself among us. Or it is because of the inbuilt mechanism of our age-old traditions imbibed by us by way of our feeding ourselves on the milk of our rich cultural heritage, a phenomenon that defies explanation in a few words.

One needn't overemphasize the truth that 'Rama' is a household name in India. So, there is not much for me to talk about him in the twenty first century where we are inescapably surrounded by hi-tech electronic gadgets and naturally getting bogged down by information overload. People crave for material comforts by comparing themselves with their neighbours and friends. As a result, most of us budge into the rat race and wilfully or unwittingly follow unethical means to keep up appearances. We are all happy to outward appearances. But we really are not. Now invariably a question may rise in your mind: what is the connection

Alongwith our rich culture comes a host of virtues and human values that stand as a beacon to guide humanity at all times and prevent us from going astray. Every ethnic community has a code of conduct, a set of norms that have been self-imposed with a view to keeping human beings as humane first of all. Do we follow those long-cherished values in life today to better the standards of our living or do we conveniently wink at those virtues and values, and by being blind to the time-tested

moral standards, try to live in a world of illusions, mistaking it for a blissful glorified land of opportunities and conveniences?

I can hear someone asking me, "Who prescribed the moral standards and for whom? Why should we adhere to such abstractions in life when we are actively engaged in trying to explore new avenues in the field of science and technology to take humanity to a new high?" True, questions like these seem to be rational and fall within the ambit of our reasoning ability. However, why then the family courts in India and elsewhere are flooded with divorce suits? The couples concerned have abundant money, and with that they are able to buy all pleasures that they strive to enjoy, that is, everything they wish to attain is available within their reach without much effort on their part. Despite all that, why can't they lead a happy, peaceful and contented life? It is a question to ponder over.

Every individual is entrusted with certain duties. It may be a male or a female. They owe a lot to the people around them at home and to society at large. Every individual has to play many roles in their lives and discharge their bounden duties and responsibilities. One has to be a son or daughter, a student, a spouse, an earning member or professional, a father or mother, a friend, an amiable well-behaved good citizen and the like. Sometimes we play many roles all at a time. At every stage in our life-journey, which is nothing but a sojourn on earth, one is expected to cherish certain morals and values which alone can ensure real and genuine happiness and peace of mind, namely a kind of delivery from stress and strain that enshrouds our outlook on life in proper perspective and sinks us

deep in the mire of the ills of modern life. Here comes Rama's life as a remedy and offers a good prescription for how one should conduct oneself through life.

The story of Rama may be a slice of human history or a myth. It does not matter much here. There may be many versions of Rama's story. Again, that should not hinder us from understanding the core values underlying Rama's story. Most of us may have seen the *Ramayana* serial on TV that has been telecast repeatedly in many regional languages. So the storyline is very familiar to most of us. On the surface, the story appears to be a war between the good and the evil and also a story of the good vanquishing the evil at last. But here I am going to highlight the multi-dimensional character of Rama and dwell briefly on the relevance of his passage through life to today's world that is ridden by various adverse factors, physical, moral and psychological.

Rama, considered to be the seventh avatar of Lord Vishnu, is generally portrayed as a polite, self-controlled, virtuous youth always ready to help others in almost all versions of the *Ramayana*, if we keep away for the moment all the controversies about the birthplace of Rama and the ending of the epic. As I have already told, cutting across the different versions of Rama's life story, there lies a common foundation and an essential core of values associated with a battle between the good and the evil. Symbolically, Rama's life story offers a framework to represent, conceptualize and comprehend the world and the nature of life. From this viewpoint, Rama's life story is quite relevant even today because, in the words of Sheldon

Pollock, it “tells the culture what it is”. In other well-known epics of the world, it is always a battle between the good and the evil, with the immortal powerful gods or heroes arrayed on one side and the mortal struggling humans stationed on the other side. But the story of Rama differs from this common universal template. As Rama is both a divine human and a mortal god, the character of Rama incorporates both divine and human attributes into an exemplary being that transcends both humans and gods.

As a person, Rama personifies the characteristics of an ideal person (*purushottama*). He had within him all the desirable virtues that any individual would seek to aspire, and he fulfills all his moral obligations creditably. Rama went to the court of Janaka, King of Mithila. There he broke the bow of Shiva, which until then none of the kings of the earth had been able to do, and won Sita, daughter of Janaka, as the reward of his strength and valour. Soon after the marriage, his father, Dasaratha, King of Ayodhya, entrusted him with the reins of government. But Kaikeyi, the wife of Dasaratha, earnestly desiring to obtain the crown for her own son, Bharata, implored Rama with the most urgent entreaties to forgo his claims. This Rama consented to do and after abdicating the kingdom retired into the jungles accompanied by his brother Lakshmana and Sita. He could have resisted the vile move by Kaikeyi but he obliged as he regarded it as his filial duty to obey his father and step-mother Kaikeyi without a murmur.

While in exile, Rama lived a humble simple life and provided protection and relief to ascetics at different ashrams in the forest being harassed and

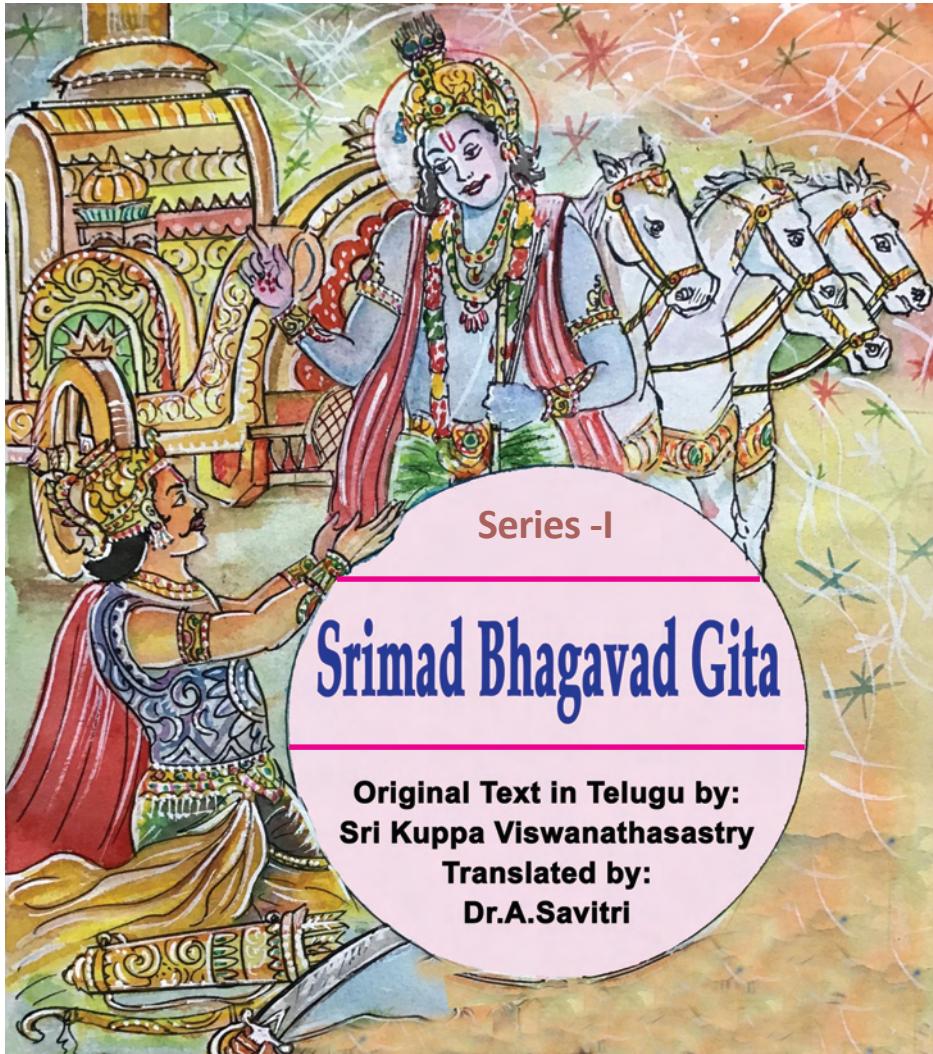
persecuted by demons. The lesson we have to learn from this is that life is not always smooth and is often punctuated with ups and downs. So, we need to develop plenty of tolerance and flexibility in conducting ourselves through the several roles we are supposed to play in life and help the needy and the underprivileged as far as possible.

When Rama explored the means of rescuing his beloved Sita from the clutches of Ravana, King of Lanka, he made an alliance with Sugriva, king of the monkeys to whom he rendered great service by killing Vali who had deprived Sugriva of his legitimate claim to the throne. Sugriva and his commander-in-chief Hanuman helped Rama construct a bridge across the straits and reach Lanka with the army of monkeys. Engaged in several battles, Rama finally vanquished and killed Ravana. For this timely help, Rama had established a lifelong friendship with Sugriva, thereby exemplifying the virtues of genuine friendship transcending social ranks.

At this juncture, it is worth remembering that while Sita was in the power of another, that is, Ravana, she swore inviolable chastity, whatever efforts her treacherous ravisher might employ to seduce her. She serves as a model for married women even today.

As Rama has observed all this in life and has become an epitome of the timeless virtues and values of life, necessary for everyone everywhere, no doubt Rama is regarded as a *maryada purushottama* or the best of upholders of Dharma. We may not be able to emulate Rama but we can follow in his footsteps to the maximum extent possible.





Bhagavad means the 'Omnipotent', 'Gita' means song. The Bhagavad Gita is a song of the Blessed One. It is the doctrine given by Lord Krishna, an incarnation of the Highest Divinity to Arjuna during Kurukshetra. Each and every word of Gita speaks the life-style of the beings on this universe. It teaches how the universe started and how every being is connected with the ultimate (an omnipotent – God)

From this month, Sapthagiri Magazine provides its reader some of the important points in Bhagavadgita in the form of stories for easy understanding. The stories that will be published in the magazine will help Sapthagiri readers know much about our way of life according to the Gita.

Before one absorbs Bhagavad Gita's elixir hopefully, it is necessary to understand consistently, thoroughly & meticulously that the doctrine Srimad Bhagavad Gita is related to the lifestyle of humans.

For this, one has to know the story from Chandoopanishad. According to it, one day Lord Brahma organized an assembly. He invited three categories of audience to assemble in his meeting. From heaven – demi gods, from Pathala Loka – demons and from earth – some people. The gathering was big as it had good number of audience. Most of them were eagerly waiting for Prajapathi (Brahma). He came and sat on a chair placed for him. The whole gathering requested Prajapathi (Brahma) to convey the reason to assemble such huge gathering. They prayed Prajapathi to instruct them. They were looking at each other and were eagerly waiting for the instructions that Prajapathi would convey them. Breaking their curiosity, Prajapathi (Brahma)

pronounced three letters 'Dha, Dha, Dha'. While he was pronouncing, the audience did not understand the meaning. They thought that Prajapathi was invoking virtuous words before he instructs them. They even felt that Brahma used the three letters 'Dha, Dha, Dha' in the place of 'Guru Brahma'.

Prajapathi left the place leaving the gathering in dilemma. He conveyed that his instruction was 'Dha, Dha, Dha'. With undecided words, the audience left that place. They questioned themselves what Brahma did preach? All demi-Gods assembled at one place, discussed about the instruction. They felt that Brahma knew well about them and He could well assess them as He was extraordinary and magnificent. They opined that Brahma would have instructed them according to their need. One received the place of demi-Gods only after attaining virtuosity. But it also increased the feeling of arrogance and stubbornness among demi-Gods. For such instruction, Brahma would have given the name 'Dhamyatha' which means not to be arrogant and keep control on all senses. Then the demi-Gods doubted about the other two 'Dha, Dha'.

They discussed and concluded that one 'Dha' for demi-Gods, another 'Dha' for human beings and the last one for 'demons'. Just like demi-Gods, demons also sat for discussion. They thought that they were lacking of kindness. They came to conclusion that they were cruel while dealing others and even in war they kill others tortuously. Slight disturbances and temper provoke them to act cruelly and to take decisions also cruelly. So they came to the conclusion that Brahma would have instructed them to be humble and kind. For that they imagined the word 'Dhayathvam' and the other two 'Dha's" for demi-Gods and human Beings. Similarly, human

beings sat for discussion and they came to conclusion that human beings were penurious. They do not like to spend amount. So Lord Brahma would have instructed them to be donated. The word used for it is 'Dhaanam'.

In many of the occasions, a big list of meanings is provided to explain "what is Penance?" Of those, one states, 'eithath phal vavatha Parithyahu, 'yashvandh dhathithi' which states 'penance means – to donate", "Dhanam Tapaha" . In many of the occasions, this point reiterated.

(to be contd....)

TRADITIONAL DRESS CODE is Compulsory

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams made it compulsory for the devotees to wear Traditional Dress while coming for Darshan of Lord Venkateswara in the Tirumala temple. As part of this, T.T.D. implemented Traditional Dress Code to the devotees coming for Arjitha sevas and Rs.300/- darshan also.

Apart from this, devotees should compulsory wear mask and gloves due to corona pandemic and maintain distance while in the Q lines.

DEVOTEES COMING FOR SWAMI DARSHAN MUST FOLLOW THE BELOW GIVEN DRESS CODE :

Women : Saree with blouse, Halfsaree, Punjabi Dress with Duppata and Chudidhar with Duppata

Men : Paijama–Kurtha, Dhoti– Uttariyam

LET US LEARN SANSKRIT

LESSON - 6

Original Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Kasi Krishnacharya

Modified Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Samudrala Lakshmanaiah

English by : Dr. S. Vaishnavi

यः = Who

अन्यः = Other person

स्वः = Self

प्रभृतिः = From

श्वः = Tomorrow

ह्यः = Yesterday

सन्तु = Let them be

स्त = Are there (you all)

असाम = Be there (Let us)

QUESTIONS

a 1. वयम् अद्य प्रभृति तत्र स्मः। २. यूयं शः प्रभृति अत्र स्त। ३. ह्यः अहं तत्र आसम्।
४. अन्यः तत्र नासीत्। ५. यस्तत्रासीत् सः अहम्। ६. त्वं कः? ७. अहम् एकः।
८. कदा त्वं तत्र आसीः? ९. ते ह्यस्तत्रासन्। १०. तत्र ह्यः के आसन्, अद्य प्रातः प्रभृति
के सन्ति?

b 1. Were you not there yesterday? 2. I was not there. 3. Let we all be there. 4. Let them be
here. 5. Where were you all from today? 6. We were here. 7. You all were there. 8. Where
are these people now? 9. They were here. 10. Now there is a person there.

ANSWERS

१. अस्ति २. न अस्ति ३. अस्ति ४. न अस्ति ५. अस्ति ६. न अस्ति ७. अस्ति ८. न अस्ति ९. अस्ति १०. अस्ति

यesterday, who are there from this morning? 7. I am one. 8. Where were you there? 9. They were there yesterday. 10. Who were there
yesterday. 4. No one else was there. 5. One who was there, he is me. 6. Who are you?

1. We all are there from today. 2. Let you all stay here from tomorrow. 3. I was there

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

Tirumala

Sri Venkateswaraswamivari

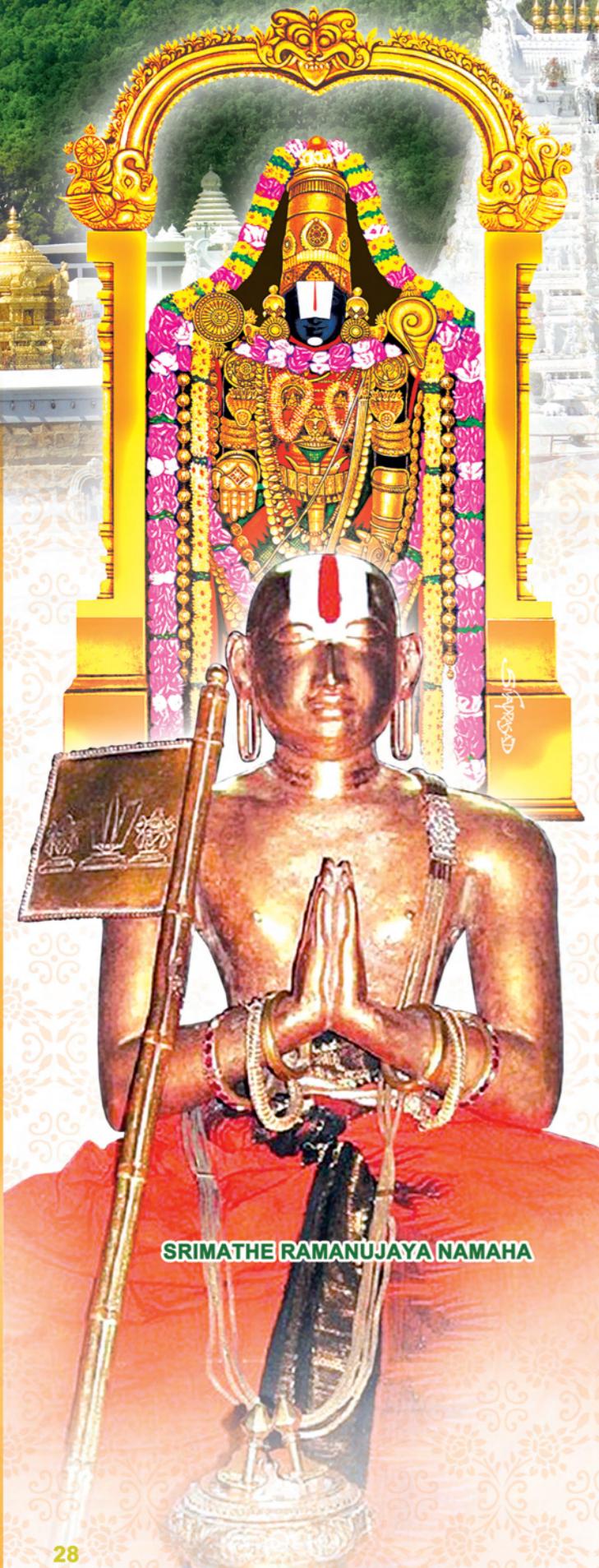
Vasanthotsavam

From 24-04-2021 to 26-04-2021.



.....file photos

SRI RAMANUJA NAMAVALI



Astabhujasevaka Ramanujal!
 Anantharoopa Ramanujal!
 Anaadharakshaka Ramanujal!
 Amruthamoorthy Ramanujal!
 Adbhutharoopa Ramanujal!
 Adharmasathru Ramanujal!
 Aamudalvan Ramanujal!
 Aashritharakshaka Ramanujal!
 Aanandaroopa Ramanujal!
 Aadisesha Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Aapadbandhava Ramanujal!
 Elaiyaalwaare Ramanujal!
 Udayavare Ramanujal!
 Embaaronadha Ramanujal!
 Karunantharanga Ramanujal!
 Kalidwamsaka Ramanujal!
 Kalpavrukshama Ramanujal!
 Daasapaavanaa Ramanuja!
 Dharmasamsthapaka Ramanujal!
 Daasarathiguru Ramanujal!
 Deenajanodhaara Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Dheenasaranya Ramanujal!
 Deenadayalo Ramanujal!
 Deenabandho Ramanujal!
 Devarajapriya Ramanujal!
 Kaashaayambara Ramanujal!

Kaarunyajaladhe Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanujal!
 Kaamaadhenu Ramanujal!
 Kaamaadihara Ramanujal!
 Kaamithaphalada Ramanujal!
 Kaanthamatheesutha Ramanujal!
 Kuresapoojitha Ramanujal!
 Kesavathanaya Ramanujal!
 Koyilannane Ramanujal!
 Gadyathrayakara Ramanujal!
 Gopimokshada Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Godaagraja Sriramanuja
 Thiruppuliyalwaare Ramanujal!
 Thridandadhaari Ramanujal!
 Dayaasindhoo Ramanujal!
 Puranapurusha Ramanujal!
 Purushapungava Ramanujal!
 Pundarikaksha Ramanujal!
 Periyambichaathra Ramanujal!
 Balabhadraa Jaya Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Bhakthajanapriya Ramanujal!
 Bhavabhayahara Ramanujal!
 Bhakthamandara Ramanujal!
 Desikendra Ramanujal!
 Nithyanirmala Ramanujal!

Paramadayalo Ramanujal!
 Panchaacharyapadhaashritha Ramanujal!
 Parankusasevaka Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Paramahamsa Ramanujal!
 Paavanapurusha Ramanujal!
 Papavimochana Ramanujal!
 Phanisareera Ramanujal!
 Priyamvada Sri Ramanuja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Yaamunapriya Ramanujal!
 Ranganathaputhra Ramanujal!
 Lakshmanamune Ramanujal!
 Leela Maanusha vigraha Ramanujal!
 Varadarajasutha Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanujal!
 Veeradhiveera Ramanujal!
 Vaishnavapriya Ramanujal!
 Sankhachakraprada Ramanujal!
 Saaradaasokanasa Ramanujal!
 Shishtaranjana Ramanujal!
 Shishtaparipala Ramanujal!
 Sribhashyakartha Ramanujal!
 Sriramanuja Ramanujal!
 Srilakshmanaaryaa Ramanujal!
 Srirangapriya Ramanujal!
 Ramanujasri Yathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanujal!
 Bhakthavatsala Ramanujal!

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

Bhaagavathapriya Ramanujal!
 Bhashaasannutha Ramanujal!
 Bhuvanapaavana Ramanujal!
 Bhuridayanidhe Ramanujal!
 Bhoothapureesa Ramanujal!
 Mannadha Jaya Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanuja!
 Manthraprakaasa Ramanujal!
 Muktidaayaka Ramanujal!
 Meshardhrasambhava Ramanujal!
 Sriramasodara Ramanujal!
 Srirangashritha Ramanujal!
 Srikrishnaagraja Ramanujal!
 Sribhashyakara Ramanujal!
 Shelvapillajanaka Ramanujal!
 Swethavarna Ramanujal!
 Seshavatara Ramanujal!
 Sokhanasana Ramanujal!
 Sahasranama Ramanujal!
 Satyasamkalpa Ramanujal!
 Sajjanapriya Ramanuja!
 Saakshibootha Ramanuja!
 Sudheergabhamu Ramanujal!
 Sugunaakara Ramanujal!
 Soorishikhamani Ramanujal!
 Sousheelyabhusha Ramanujal!
 Kshanthivardhana Ramanujal!
 Ksheerapureesa Ramanujal!
 Ramanuja Sriyathiraja!
 Yathiraja Sri Ramanujal!



Sri Malladi Vishnu, M.L.A., Vijayawada (Central) took the oath as a Special Invitee of the TTD Trust Board on 25.03.2021. On this occasion, Sri A. V. Dharma Reddy, the Additional Executive Officer of the TTD presented the portrait of Srivaru and Ammavaru to him.



Special rituals were performed to Lord Rudra the 'Kshetrapalaka' of Tirumala on the auspicious occasion of Maha Sivaratri.



The TTD Trust Board Chairman, Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy & the TTD Executive Officer, Dr. K. S. Jawahar Reddy, I.A.S. presented the sacred silk clothes on behalf of the TTD to Lord Sri Kalahasthiswara Swamy as a part of the Annual Brahmotsavams.



The Additional Executive Officer, Sri A.V. Dharma Reddy presented the 'Seshavasthram' on behalf of the TTD as part of the utsavams on the occasion of 426th 'vardhanti' celebrations of Sri Guru Raghavendra Swamy of Mantralayam.



Sri Ananthalwar 967th 'Avatharotsavam' was performed in Tirumala by the TTD. Sri Sri Sri Pedda Jeeyar Swami, Sri Sri Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Prof. K. Rajagopalan, the Secretary, HDPP, and the ancestors of Sri Ananthalwar participated in the programme.

Dr. N. Ramesan's book 'The Tirumala Temple' is a comprehensive and outstanding work about the multi-farious aspects of the temple of Lord Venkateswara in Tirumala. His book comprises literary, epigraphical, iconographical, archeological, chronological features and the glorious culture of the temple. It is comprehensive and scholarly in its true spirit. It is a welcome and tangible addition to the celebrated history and literature of the temple and also about its glorious antiquity. It is the '*magnum opus*' of the writer.

The monumental book is considered to be the most splendid and most exquisitely comprehensible chronicle of Lord Venkateswara. The keen and ardent reading of the book promotes the consciousness of one's 'sanatana dharma' which is the chief characteristic of Hindu philosophy. The writer aptly and deftly provides a kaleidoscopic quality in presenting the exhaustive

features of the temple in the book.

His spiritualistic way in writing the book is stupendous. He has vividly described the elements in the Tirumala

Temple, essential ritual practices, ethical conduct and divine aspirations for creating and fostering a spiritual consciousness in the society.

The author has laid much emphasis on the spiritual values in his work. His spiritual perspectives are astute and lucid. They add luster to the divine and spiritual scholarship of the writer. His approach in writing the book makes the reader grasp the most significant factors of the temple in a brief manner. The book explores the hidden glories of the temple for nurturing spiritual feelings in the hearts of the innumerable devotees of Lord Venkateswara.

The book comprises many facets relating to the natural and affluent environment of the temple. It depicts all kinds of ecological opulence like flora and fauna. The Sapthagiri Magazine is going to publish some significant excerpts from this book to provide its reader the multifaceted history and comprehensive outlook regarding the abode of Lord Venkateswara from this month as a serial. Dr. N. Ramesan's book is his '*tour de force*.' It succinctly sums up the significant spiritual tenets of Hinduism. The reading of this serial makes one attain transcendental knowledge and eternal bliss.

THE TIRUMALA TEMPLE

- Dr. N. Ramesan

Part
I



THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TIRUMALA TEMPLE

The Sri Venkateswara temple of Tirumala has been undergoing several additions and changes during the centuries. Perhaps at the time it was originally constructed, it must have been simple structure with a Garbhagriha and a Mukhamandapa together with an Antarala and pradakshina surrounding it. Inscriptions found in the temple give plenty of references to its renovation and rebuilding and addition of later structures. Curiously the earliest mention of Sri Venkateswara in the epigraphs is found in Tiruchokinur or modern Tiruchanur and not in association with the Tirumala temple on top of the Venkatadri hill, till we reach the date of the consecration of the Manavalapperumal in the Tiruvengadam temple itself. This earliest inscription found in Tiruchokinur was made in the 51st regnal year of Ko-Vijaya Dantivikraman (826 A.D.) and tells in distinct terms that a proxy or Tiruvengadatupperumanadigal existed in Tiruvilan Koil of Tiruchokinur. The phraseology of the inscription makes it clear that he was another Lord in Tiruchokinur representing the Lord at Tiruvengadam, as we have now a number of Venkateswara temples in various places. The renovation made in the 13th century at Tirumala was so done as to overlap the walls of the original sanctum. It is therefore not possible now to examine the outside of the original walls of the garbhagriha and determine how the temple might have stood originally.

The present temple is composed of a number of structures, gopurams and prakarams and it is essential for a proper study of the temple, to understand the details of the general layout of the temple and the distribution of the structures and sculptures within.

This temple as already mentioned sprawls over an area of a few acres, and is 415 ft. long and

263 ft. wide. It has three prakaras or enclosures centering around the holy sanctum of Lord Venkateswara. The inner-most prakara called Mukkoti pradakshina has got passages on the south, west and north only and is also open to the public only on Vaikunta Ekadasi or Mukkoti Ekadasi day, which generally falls in the month of January.

Structures outside the temple

When one ascends to the temple on top of the hill on foot, by the old pathway, there is an old unfinished or mondi Gopuram facing south. The short paved roadway towards north leads to another small gopuram and portal which is a rather older construction. After crossing this gate-way, one arrives at the Sannidhi street running east to west straight to the main gate-way and gopuram of the Tirumala temple. This gopuram is known as the 'Mukhadwara' or the "Periya Tiruvasal" and is now called "Padikavali gopuram". At the eastern end of this street is the temple of Hanuman and to the left is the thousand pillared mantapa. But, know it was demolished to the north of the road lies the periyajiyar Matam and at the western end and in front of the gopuram is a small but tall four pillared mantapam, which was being used during festivals in olden times. From this mantapa there is a flight of steps to the full width of the street, descending to meet the east mada street running north to south in front of the main gate-way of the temple.

As one faces the temple, enclosed to the north prakaram wall of the temple, is a small pond called "Swami Pushkarini" or "Tirukoneri" in Tamil. On the north-western shore of this pushkarini and near the middle of the north mada street, is the temple of Sri Varahaswamy.

The north and south mada streets measure about 800 ft. each in length and the west is about 900 feet. The east mada street running in front of

the main temple and along the east side of the pushkarini, is about 750 feet (the measurements here mentioned were taken when the book was written). This ground slopes from west to east and the entire area bounded by these streets is much lower in level than the outlying country.

Sri Hathiramji matam

This matam is still an important landmark in the Tirumala temple precincts. This contains the Samadhi of the various Pithadipathis of this matam and also some shrines where exquisite sculptures of Dasavatara etc., are displayed. There is here also an antique painting showing the playing of chess by Lord Venkateswara with one of the persons connected with the matam.

Prakarams and Pradakshinas

The temple is surrounded on all sides by three compound walls known as prakarams or

avaranams. The narrowest of these three is the one between the Garbhagriha wall and the first prakaram and the widest is between the outer and middle prakarams. These pradakshinas are known as:

a. Mukkoti pradakshina, nearest to the Garbhagriha (which is open only on the three sides excepting the east and to which access to the public is given only on Vaikunta Ekadasi day).

b. Vimana pradakshina which is now the main pradakshina, used by the pilgrims and from the northern side of which vimana darshana is had, and

c. Sampangi pradakshina, which is generally not used by the public. The place is now being used mainly as a store room etc.

The space enclosed between each set of prakarams is called a pradakshinam or antarmandalam.

(to be continued)



THE RELEVANCE OF VEDAS TO THE PRESENT GENERATION

- Smt. P.Sujatha

The Vedas are treasures of knowledge and wisdom. They also embody the rituals, tradition, culture and various wings of science in its fold. These oral compilations descended from yore provide umpteen insights into the modern world. They are not simply Sanskrit texts but a gold mine to dig deeper to obtain precious thought-provoking ideas from the civilization of the past which can have a bearing on the present generations. The Vedas are only one part of the entire source of expertise elucidated by our eminent seers.

Yajnavalkya Smriti refers to fourteen sources of knowledge. They are Vedas – (Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda), Vedangas (parts of Vedas – Shiksha (phonetics or pronunciation), Kalpa (rituals), Vyakarana (Grammar), Nirukta (etymology), Chandas (prosody) and Jyotisha (astrology and astronomy), Puranas, Nyaya, Meemamsa (critical investigation) and Dharma shastra (the science of righteousness). Each Vedic scripture has four types of texts, namely, Samhita (mantras and benedictions), Brahmana (rituals ceremonies and sacrifices, Aranyaka (to

prepare for a secluded life) and Upanishad (meditation, philosophy, and spiritual knowledge). The four Vedas also have Upavedas, that is secondary knowledge sources. The Upavedas are: for Rigveda it is Ayurveda (medicine), Yajurveda- Dhanurveda (archery), Samaveda – Gandharvaveda (music and sacred dance) and Atharvaveda – Arthashastra (economics). Some critics have bifurcated that Ayurveda is associated with Atharvaveda and Architecture with Rigveda.

The Veda contains the highest spiritual knowledge (Para Vidya) as well as the knowledge of the world (Apara Vidya). Thus, apart from philosophy, we find descriptions of various aspects of the different subjects such as sciences, medicine, political science, psychology, agriculture, poetry, art, music, etc.

One of the methods of learning scriptures is chanting (repeatedly reading the same verse). It is a combination of sound, breath and rhythm that helps to channelise energy. The mantras have both psychological and physiological effects on the body. It improves immunity, concentration, and learning, it releases stress and



depression. The lungs, breathing system, muscles on the face get radiated. This olden concept is now being implemented in the form of group singing, bhajans and group activities in the modern system.

A base in Vedas

Many present-day discoveries, inventions find a base in Vedic literature. For example, the invention of the aeroplane is what was described as Pushpaka Vimana of Kubera, the Telephone, Television found references in the form of telepathy in the Vedas.

References to Vedic cosmology, astrology, space research, planets and galaxies, medicinal science and surgery, nuclear theory, thermodynamics, energy concepts, environment management and many other discoveries and innovations are part of Vedic literature.

The present management theories find their roots in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The description of Manidweepam of Goddess Bhagawati showed architectural knowledge. The construction of a bridge on the ocean, using arrows, bows (firing) and chariots as weapons of warfare are all now replicated with new war technology.

The ancient Gurukul education system is today recognized as the best method of teaching and inculcating leadership and interpersonal communication skills amongst the younger generation.

Vedic mathematics is another example. The Vedic system had also invented the zero, which has been called one of the greatest developments in the history of mathematics.

Modern tools

Many doctors today suggest pranayama, meditation, as the modern tools for good health, which were all borrowed from Vedas. Madi and Acharam practised earlier are now prescribed as social distancing and not touching anything without purifying with water. Natural foods, organic farming are all the inputs that were described in the olden texts. Cleanliness of body and mind which were given importance by our seers through performing daily prayers to Lord of Fire is now replicated in the form of burning sticks with ghee and other fragrant materials.

We have wealth of knowledge on all spheres of our life properly described in the Vedas and other religious texts. The present generation needs to understand them properly and interpret them to suit the present lifestyles to reap the benefit of our elders' collective knowledge.



APPEAL TO DEVOTEES

- Devotees must maintain a social distance while collecting Laddus.
- Always wear mask.
- After collecting Laddus, go outside through exit gate.
- In case you face any technical issues at the Laddu counter, please contact TTD staff.
- Please follow the instructions given by the Security and TTD staff meticulously and cooperate.

JATAYU RECEIVED SALVATION

- Sri Ramesh Kandadai



The Ramayana is special to all of us. It is not just a story but a part of our life and culture. As we travel from the cities into the rural areas, the presence of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita is everywhere – in the names of the people, places or related to an event in the Ramayana. Among the many legends, an inspiring one is that of Jatayu.

In the Aranya Kanda of the Ramayana, we read how first Rama, Lakshmana and Sita are on their way to Panchavati when they come across the bird, Jatayu, who tells them that he is King Dasaratha's friend and explains in detail the creation of life to them. Later, in the same Aranya Kanda, we read about how Rama and Lakshmana begin their search after Sita's abduction. They come across a bow and arrows and a suit of armour encrusted with gems as well as a canopy reflecting the remnants of a battle. And then they come across a huge bird, a gridra or eagle, lying on the ground bleeding because its wings had been chopped off. Rama goes forward to put an end to the bird because he is certain that the bird is a Rakshasa in disguise and had devoured Sita. Going closer, they realize it is Jatayu.

The bird tells Rama that it was Ravana, the son of Sage Vishravas who had taken away by force the Princess of Videha and was heading south.

Jatayu had tried to stop Ravana from carrying out this evil deed but in vain. There was a battle in which Jatayu had killed Ravana's charioteer and destroyed his chariot; but then he had been struck a mortal blow and his wings were cut off. After giving all this information in detail, Jatayu dies. Rama proceeds to cremate him with due rituals because, to him, Jatayu, the ruler of the feathered kingdom was as venerable and honourable as King Dasharatha, his father (Valmiki Ramayana 3-68-26).

Many thousand years later, when Periya Nambi was about to do the last rites for Maraner Nambi, the people of Srirangam asked how such a thing could be justified. Periya Nambi replied that if Lord Rama himself could perform the last rites for a bird and grant Jatayu *moksha*, then Maraner Nambi fully deserved at least as much.

Let us have a look

This is the importance given to Jatayu *moksha* and naturally, the place associated with this is special. Approximately 70 km from Chennai, on the Chennai-Vellore highway is a small village called Tiru-put-kuzhi. We get off the highway and enter the village through a side street lined by a few houses on one side and fields on the other. Till not so long ago, the entire area was green with lush paddy fields,

fruit orchards and plentiful water. In fact, Tirumangai Alwar has written the mangalasasanam for the temple. He refers to Tiruputkuzhi as the place where the lush greenery with plenty of water attracts our senses and where Vijayaraghava resides.

Today, it is still a small village with a few streets; fields and orchards are still there but not in immediate sight. The temple precincts are now fairly close to the highway and the temple vimanam is visible from the national highway. Thiru refers to auspiciousness, pul is bird and kuzhi is pit. This is where Lord Rama did the *antima samskara* for the bird and the temple tank is 'gridra-pushkarini' or Jatayu theertham. A shrine to Jatayu is seen facing the tank. It may be noted that the bali peetam and the dwaja stambham are located outside the temple, adjacent to the tank.

Lord Rama as Vijaya Raghavan

The temple is spacious, but generally quiet, filled today with the coos of pigeons fluttering around the Veerakoti vimanam. We climb a few steps and enter the mandapam. Lord Rama gives darshan in the Narayana form, as Vijaya Raghavan, as he is granting salvation to Jatayu. He is seen seated cradling Jatayu in his lap. Sridevi and Bhudevi are there by the Lord's side, with positions interchanged. Sridevi who normally is seen to the Lord's right was unable to handle the jwala (heat) emanating from the cremation of Jatayu and so moved to the Lord's left, slightly tilting her face away. Likewise, the Thayar's shrine is located to the left and the shrine to Andal is located to the right of the Lord in the temple.

As we come down the steps after a fulfilling darshan, we notice the handholds along the steps beautifully carved out of stone and very helpful because the steps are a little steep. The temple abounds in inscriptions and there are beautiful carvings all around too. In the rear of the temple are the Vahana mandapas. The various vahanas are used during the Brahmotsavams when the utsava murti is taken out in a grand procession. A specialty is the wooden horse vahana which is sprung in such a way that it rocks like a real galloping horse while being carried during festivals. The carpenter who made the vahana is honoured even today. When Lord emerges on the horse



in procession, he still stops in front of the house of the carpenter.

Amavasya days are special for the temple. Marakathavalli thayar is worshipped especially by those desiring progeny. Childless women bathe in the temple tank and tie a handful of roasted green-gram in their sari end and perform vrata on new moon night. The green-gram sprouts indicating that they will have children with the Mother's blessing. The temple is also important for a child's first tonsure.

A more recent relevance of Tiruputkuzhi is that Ramanuja as a young boy started his education in the school run by Yadavaprakasa. This was run in the temple precincts apparently. There is a small plaque commemorating this in the hall next to the shrine to Andal.

The majestic appearance of Sri Vijayaraghava perumal made Swami Desikan compose "Paramarthastuti". In the very first sloka, he refers to the destroyer of Ravana, seated by the Gridra-saras giving his worshippers darshan like the parijata tree in Indra's garden. He is only saying what Sage Brighu said ages ago in the Vamana Purana: nothing more needs to be said than bathing in the 'gridra-pushkarini' or the auspicious eagle tank, and prostrating before the Lord and worshipping him mindfully.





THE DIVISION OF TIME ACCORDING TO SMRUTIS

- Dr. C.V. Sulochana

Kaala is a word used in Sanskrit to mean time. It is a continuous process like a wheel which does not stop even for a moment, i.e Kala has no end or beginning. That is why it is called Ananta and Anadi. Every time cycle has three components- Srishti, Sthiti and Laya. Srishti means creation, Sthiti means continuation and Laya means dissolution. These three components are under the control of the Trinity i.e, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Siva. Lord Brahma is responsible for creation, Lord Vishnu for sustenance and Lord Siva for dissolution. The universe which we live in begins with the creation of Brahma. It runs till the end of life of Brahma. After his death another cycle starts with the creation of a new Brahma, created by Maha Vishnu. Thus the entire universe is under the control of Kaala.

The usual scheme of the yuga theory for division of time on a macrocosmic scale according to smrutis is as follows.

60 seconds =One minute

60 minutes = One hour

24 hours = One day

15 days = One paksha

2 Pakshas = One masa

6 masaa = One ayana

2 ayanas = One year

Maha yuga : One Mahayuga is equal to 43,20,000 years. Each Maha yuga is divided into 4 parts in the ratio 4:3:2:1 called Satya or Krita yuga, Treta yuga, Dvapara yuga and Kali yuga. The duration of these yugas are as follows:

Krita yuga = $4/10 \times 43,20,000 = 17,28,000$ Years

Treta Yuga = $3/10 \times 43,20,000 = 12,96,000$ Years

Dvapara yuga = $2/10 \times 43,20,000 = 8,64,000$ Year

Kali Yuga = $1/10 \times 43,20,000 = 4,32,000$ Years

In Total : One Maha Yuga = 43,20,000 Years

Manvantara : 71 such Maha Yugas are called one Manvantara. Each Manvantara is ruled by Manu, the progenitor of mankind. There are 14 manvantaras. They are -

1. Svayambhuva
2. Svarochisha
3. Uttama
4. Tamasa
5. Raivata
6. Chakshusha
7. Vaivasvata
8. Surya savarni
9. Agni Savarni
10. Brahma Savarni
11. Rudra Savarni
12. Daksha Savarni
13. Rauchtya
14. Bauchtya

Before the first manvantara and after the last manvantara and between each manvantara there exists sandikala, a transitional period equal to one satya yuga. For 14 manvantaras there are 15 sandikalas.

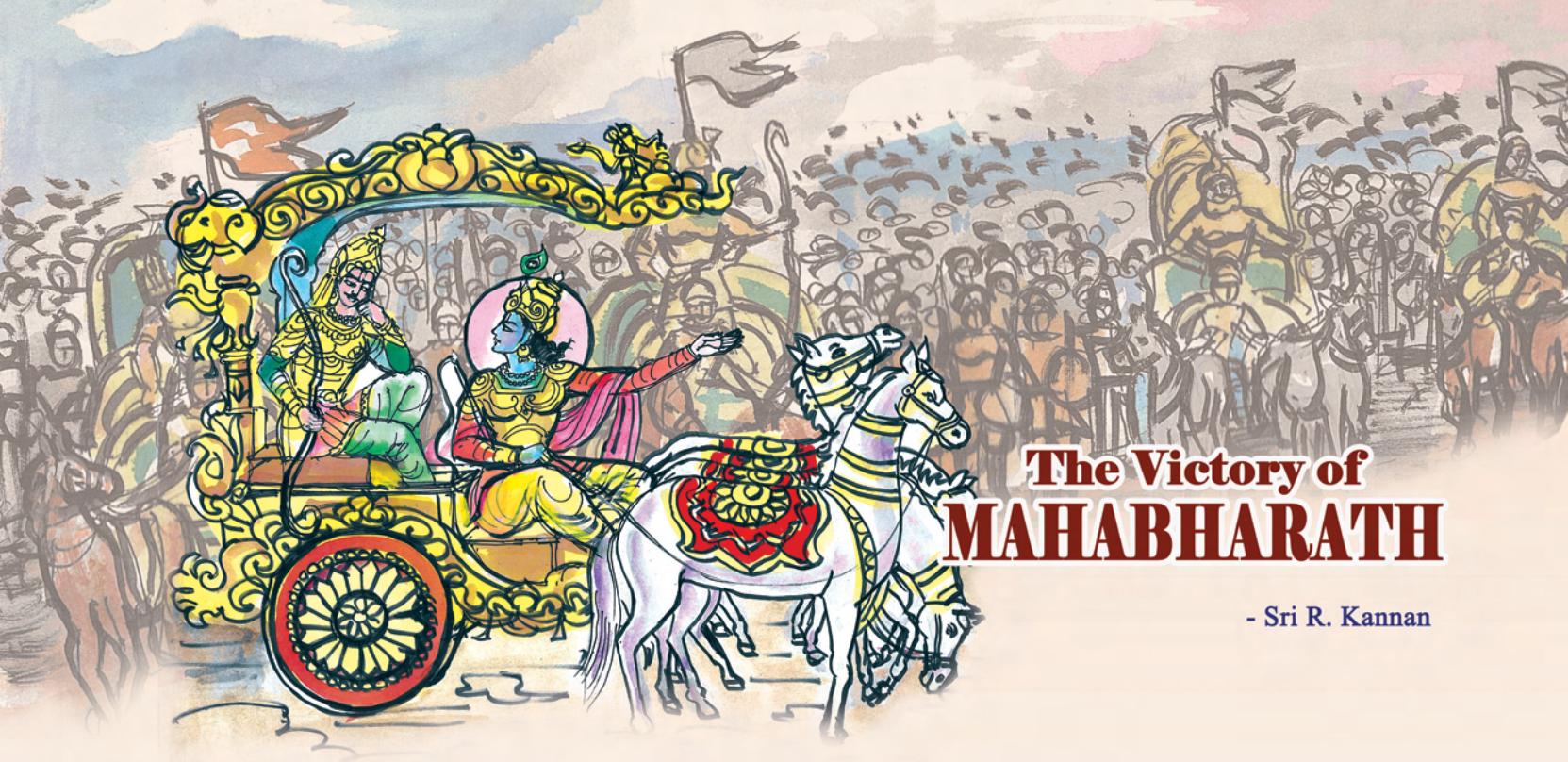
The period of 14 manvantaras along with their 15 sandikalas is called one kalpa. One kalpa is a day time duration of Lord Brahma. The night time of Lord Brahma is also of the same duration. i.e 2 kalpas constitute a day and night of Lord Brahma. 60 kalpas are equal to one month of Lord Brahma. 720 kalpas are called a year of Lord Brahma. The total life span of Lord Brahma is 100 such years.

At the end of the life of Brahma, Maha Pralaya will occur. Again the cycle starts with another new Brahma. The future Brahma will be lord Hanuma. It was declared by lord Sri Rama in Treta yuga itself.

The life span of Brahma is divided into two halves. The first half was completed. The second half is again divided into nine kalpas They are 1. Pardhiva 2. Ananta 3. Kurma 4. Brahma 5. Varaha 6. Sveta varaha 7. Pralaya 8. Parsa 9. Savitri.

At present we are under Svetavaraha Kalpa in which already six manus had been completed. We are now in the 7th one called Vaivasvata Manvantara. Even in this seventh manu 27 maha yugas had been completed. In the 28th mahayuga the first three yugas- krita, Treta and Dvapara were also completed. The 4th yuga i.e kali yuga is currently running.





The Victory of MAHABHARATH

- Sri R. Kannan

From History we learn that Kautilya otherwise known as Chanakya (350- 275 BC), was instrumental in installing Chandra Gupta on the throne and establishing the Gupta dynasty, by his sheer intelligence and forethought. He has written a treatise called Arthashastra – the Science of Material Gain - which deals with statecraft, politics, economics, military strategy, the function of the state, etc.

It is understood that he has stated that wars and battles are won by proper planning, execution, and forming proper alliance with like-minded persons and good guidance from well-wishers. The Mahabharath war is a concrete example.

As we are aware, the Mahabharath war was fought between Kauravas and Pandavas. In fact they were cousins. Greedy of enjoying the whole kingdom, Kauravas sent the Pandavas to forest defeating them by cheating them in the game of dice. They did not want to return Pandavas their share of kingdom even after their exile in the forest

for twelve years and incognito for one year. Pandavas, righteous people as they were, were ready to accept even five villages as their share after completing the period of exile. But the Kauravas would not agree. The result was the Mahabharath war which was engaged for eighteen days, taking a toll of large number of human lives.

Let us go through how Pandavas won the battle with lesser army as compared to Kauravas. The Pandavas had seven Akshohinis (a particular count of army) as against eleven on the side of Kauravas.

Before the start of the battle, both Pandavas and Kauravas wanted to have an alliance with Yadavas whose leader was Lord Krishna. Arjuna from Pandava's side and Dhuryodhana from Kaurava's side reached Dwaraka to meet Krishna. Dhuryodhana reached early and as Krishna was sleeping, he sat on the side of his head. Subsequently Arjuna reached and he sat at the feet of Lord Krishna, with great reverence, waiting for Krishna to wake up.

Krishna woke up and while getting up, he could see Arjuna first and enquired him about the welfare of Pandavas. Meanwhile Dhuryodhana interrupted saying that he was the first to arrive and that his request should be heard first. After some discussions, Krishna divided the shares thus - his Yadhava Army on one side and He himself without weapons on the other side. Dhuryodhana was very much pleased to accept Yadhava Army, as he was bent upon increasing the number of soldiers to fight on his side. But Arjuna was highly delighted to have Krishna alone on his side as he was very much attached to Him since his childhood and knew Him as a supreme guide.

Dhuryodhana wrongly estimated Krishna while Arjuna knew His powers since his childhood as one who vanquished big demons just by His Sankalpa (wish). Further Arjuna and Pandavas including Draupadi had surrendered unto him for protection while they were in exile. By choosing the divine power as their sole support, Pandavas won their battle even before the start of the war.

Lord Sri Krishna Himself has declared in **Srimad Bhagavat Gita :**

Anayaas chintayanto maam ye janaa:
paryupaasathe

Theshaam nityaabhiyukthaanaam
yokakshemam vahaamyaham (9-22)

(I take care of those who always worship me with undivided devotion and protect them).

So it is no wonder that Sri Krishna came forward to support and protect Pandavas, who had surrendered unto Him.

The Battle is about to start. Arjuna saw his kith and kin, his grandfather and mentor Bhishmacharya, his teacher Dronacharya and other close relatives on the opposite side of the battle field.

Seeing all of them he was overwhelmed with emotion. He thought, "How could I kill my own relatives and acharya and incur sin. We don't want a kingdom built on the bloodshed of these people". He was prepared to leave the battlefield.

Lord Krishna's Explanation

However Sri Krishna, advised him that he would not incur any sin by killing anybody in the battle field, as they would attain heaven after death. Further it was his duty as a warrior to fight in the war which was imposed on them. He encouraged Arjuna to fight by teaching Karmayoga- the Science of doing one's own duty. Later he continued and taught him Gnana yoga and Bhakti Yoga as well as Saranagati which will lead him to Moksha. Cleared of his confusion, Arjuna fought and won the battle. But for Sri Krishna, Arjuna would have fled from the battlefield and the war would have been lost to Kauravas.

Thus we see Lord Sri Krishna as a supreme guide. He was not only a friend and guide but also a philosopher to Arjuna.

Sri Krishna as a guide and protector of Pandavas assisted them in many ways in the battle.

He devised a plan to put Sikandi (woman transformed into a man) in front while fighting with Bhishmacharya in order to conquer him

He advised Yudhistira to pronounce "Aswathama hatha: kunjara:" and He Himself blew the conch so that Dronacharya could not hear the word Kunjara. Hearing this, Acharya stopped fight and was ultimately killed by Dhrushtadhyumna.

Similarly he devised a plan to kill Karna and Dhuryodhana by Arjuna and Bhima respectively.

He protected Arjuna from Narayana astra aimed by Bhagadatta and Naagastra sent by Karna.

He hid the sunlight by His Chakra to show Jaydradha , whom Arjuna had vowed to kill before dusk, as he was responsible for the death of Abhimanyu,his son.

These are quite a few instances quoted, in the Mahabharath where Sri Krishna protected Pandavas in the battlefield.

When there is an alliance with a good trusted supporter, one is sure to get a good result. What is there to say, when the Lord is on your side!

At the end of Srimad Bhagavat Gita Sanjaya says -

"yatra yogeswara: krishno yatra Partho
dhanurdhara:
Tatra srir vijayo buthir dhruvaa neethir mama
(18-78)

Wherever there is Krishna, the master of all mystics, and Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will also be opulence, victory, supreme power and morality. This is my strong opinion- says Sanjaya.

Thus we see Pandavas prepared, planned and executed the strategy under the guidance of Sri Krishna and achieved Victory of Mahabharath.

SRI VENKATESAYA NAMA:



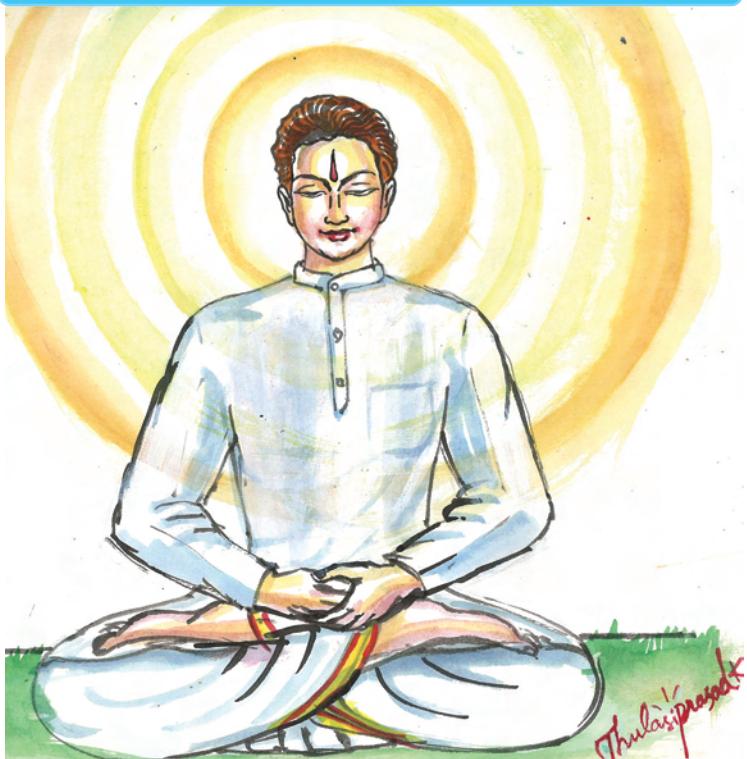
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1. Authors are advised to contribute articles to **Sapthagiri** which promote Hindu religion, culture and its importance and mainly on *Vaishnavism*.
2. The articles may deal in subjects like *Puranas*, Epics, history, temple culture, the importance of festivals etc. innovatively; Hindu Gods, the significance of temples and their glory; spiritual articles based on the moral edification of the youth; on the stalwarts like AdiSankaracharya, BhagavatRamanuja, saint poetess Tharigonda Vengamamba, Padakavithapithamaha Thallapaka Annamacharya, etc. and the other topics like Vedic Maths, Vedic Science , Astrology, Astronomy, Ayurveda, Arthashastra etc. and their relevance in the present day world.
3. The articles must be qualitative maintaining good standards, informative and thought-provoking to the readers.
4. The article must be readable, non-controversial and relevant to improve the spiritual knowledge among readers.
5. Authors should not use any copyrighted material in their articles unless appropriate permissions are obtained by them.
6. The word limit of an article should be a minimum of 1000 words, not exceeding 2,000. However, worthy research articles exceeding the above word limit may also be considered.
7. Each article should be scholarly and it should conform to the international standards by following MLA (Modern Language Association) Style sheet/format such as in-text and end text citations and works consulted or bibliography.
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YAJNA AND YOGA

- Dr. K.V. Raghupathi



The Veda speaks of *Yajna*, usually translated as 'sacrifice', as the underlying principle of life. The English term 'sacrifice' is derived from the word 'sacred'. It means to worship, pray, and sanctify. It implies offering something up in which it is transformed, gaining pure nature by losing lower nature. Sacrifice means offering to the Divine in order to spiritualize.

Yet the term 'sacrifice' can be misleading for *Yajna*. Usually, it involves two kinds of offers, one is external and the other internal. External comprises offering of sacred ingredients to the fire god such as firewood, ghee, herbs, roots, and so on. It is accompanied by the distribution of wealth at the end to the poor and weak. In those days one's wealth was measured in terms of the number of healthy cows one possessed. So, healthy cows were given away to the destitute. This charitable action, though external was viewed as a purificatory ritual.

Yajna also implies internal sacrifice, the sacrifice of petty self. This is the highest sacrifice. This is the truest meaning of *Yajna*. The petty self consists of all accumulated *samsakaras*, *vasanas*, *karmic* impulses, etc. When this is eliminated or destroyed through prayer and meditation, it is *Yajna*. Vedic *Yajnas* include not only outer fire offerings, but also internal offerings of prayer, mantra, pranayama, and *dhyana*. Along with outer sacrifices like giving wealth for charitable purposes are inner sacrifices, offering our own minds and hearts to the Divine. The Vedic Yoga is such an internal offering or sacrifice. Any *Yajna* should begin and end as an internal sacrifice of the ego. In this sense, *Yajna* also stands for 'Divine' which involves internal sacrifice.

The fire element in *Yajna* is important. It has twin powers, purification, and transformation. The element of purification purifies the ego. When the petty ego is purified, it is transformed, just as the power of heat is able to bring gold out of crude ore. Whatever is offered in this form of purification and transformation to a higher and subtler level is called *Yajna*.

Five kinds of *Yajnas*

Five kinds of *Yajnas* known as *Maha Yajnas* if practiced sincerely will remove the *karmic* debt of our life. They are: *Brahma Yajna* is a study of the scriptures and sacred Vedic texts. It is not only reading but also listening to spiritual discourses. Mere reading and listening alone are not enough. We need to deeply reflect and contemplate upon the meaning that eventually leads to *dhyana*.

DAKSHINA

In every ritualistic enterprise in our Holy Scriptures, there is a gainful procedure of bestowing the Purohit or the learned Upadhyaya who conducts the Pooja or Divine Worship oriented Ritual. It is not Daan or Charity, rather it is an Honorarium or a Respectful offering to acknowledge his wisdom and his pious profile. Interestingly, Dakshina shares its word origin to Dakshin (the Southward Direction). This implies that once given, one does not expect anything in return or reciprocation. Dakshina is prefixed with various words like Guru where Gurudakshina is the offering one bestows on one's Teacher or Guru.

Deva Yajna is worshipping the Divine and cosmic powers. This worship does not mean prayer, though it is a form of worship. One needs to go beyond. The real devotion is in complete surrender in which there is no room for ego. Surrender means the complete sacrifice of ego and seeks permanent refuge in cosmic powers.

This surrender can take place if only you have complete and unconditional faith in the Divine. You think and feel that you are just an instrument in the hands of the Divine, and you are nothing. This is nothing but the doctrine of *Saranagati* or *Prapati* professed in Visishtadvaita and Vaishnava cults.

Manushya Yajna is helping fellow human beings. Treating all human beings as equals without discriminating against them on any basis. A fellow feeling that involves love for the *loka kalyana*. This *yajna* will make one more a humanitarian and humanist.

Pitri Yajna is honouring one's own ancestors, culture, and societal norms and traditions. To respect one's own culture is a *dharmic* duty, following the spiritual traditions. *Bhuta Yajna* is treating all living beings that include plant and animal kingdom as well as protecting the earth, her lands, and waters with a sense of *karuna* or *daya* that is compassion.

When you serve all living beings making offerings to animals and birds, you are preserving the biodiversity of the planet. This way ecology of the land is protected. *Manushya Yajna* cultivates helping nature in human beings while *Bhuta Yajna* turns one compassionate. Both must complement each other. Both *Yajnas* should be practiced in order to bring peace and happiness to the earth.



SOLUTION TO PUZZLE

1 H	A	2 R	S	3 H	N	4 A		5 M
I			A		E		I	A
6 T	O	P		M		7 M	A	N
			I		A			D
8 I	N	D	I		9 M	A	R	A
L				10 H				
11 E	N	D			12 A	T	H	R
Y					R		I	R
15 A	G	O		16 I	N	D	R	A

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF Dasa Bhakti

Telugu Original by :
Sri Suswaram Nagarajacharyulu
English by : Dr.M.Krishna Kumar

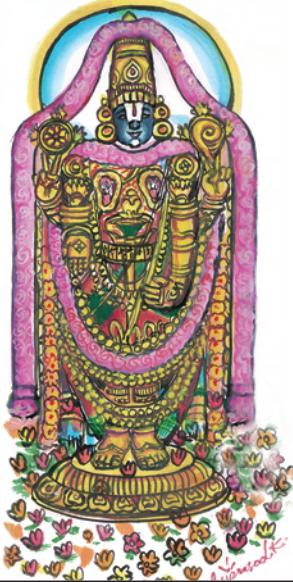


Sri Vijayadasa is a renowned Kannada saint, philosopher and composer in Kannada literature.

Sri Vijayadasa's Devotion:

Referring to the names of many significant devotees of Lord Vishnu, Sri Vijayadasa prays to Lord Venkateswara to grant him grand 'darshan' as the Lord used to protect His devotees who are in difficulties. He ironically questions the Lord with ardent piety: 'What have those devotees done to You and what haven't I done to You? What did Prahlada, Your greatest devotee give to You? What benefit did the sage Sri Suka give to You? What kind of happiness did the sage Narada bring to You? What kind of satisfaction did You enjoy from the king Rukmangada? What kind of cooperation did You get from Vibhishana? What did the bhakta Pundareeka do to You? What did the king Dhruva do for You? What did the sage Sounaka and others do for You? All of them are Your pious devotees and they fervently worshipped You. In the same way, I worship You with devotion.' Why don't You look at me and bless me? O! Lord! I am not an unknown person to You. If You don't look at me gracefully, at least look at my mentor Sri Purandaradasu who is Your beloved devotee'.

Sri Vijayadasa said that he had stayed in the house of his 'guru.' He carried water for the sake of his mentor. After the meals were finished, he used to take away the used plantain leaves. He used to eat what his mentor had provided. He observed fasting in his mentor's house. He was brought up in the supervision and guidance of his mentor. He further said to the Lord: 'If I were an offender, my mentor was a virtuous man. You



Sri Vijayadasa is a renowned Kannada saint, philosopher and composer in Kannada literature. He propagated the traditional virtues in the philosophy of Sri Madhwacharya through his famous devotional compositions called Keerthanas, Suladis, Upabhogas and Padaas. His compositions promote magnificent spiritual values in the life of a devotee and make him attain spiritual bliss.



had showered grace on my mentor. So, please shower Your graceful blessings on me too and protect me and break my chain of sins.' Reminiscing over his previous distressed circumstances, he shed tears and prayed to the Lord: 'Did I become burdensome to You who protects all the fourteen 'lokas'? If one prays to the Almighty with devotion, he can easily melt even a heart of stone.

His Eulogy to the Lord:

Sri Vijayadasa said: 'When the Ocean of Milk was being churned by the gods and the demons, You had carried the Mandaragiri on Your back and had protected it from sinking. When Goddess Bhudevi was praying, You had saved Her from the demon immediately. The two 'avatars' namely 'Kurma' and 'Varaha' are reflected here. When Lord Indra poured the torrential rain on the 'gokulam' for a period of seven days and nights continuously, You had protected the people and the cows by lifting the Govardhana giri with Your finger. In the same way, when the sage Durvasa was coming to the residence of the Pandavas to satisfy his hunger during the odd time, You had saved Draupadi from her difficulty with grace'. He further said: 'Hey!

Krishna! Were You not tired when You had carried the mountain? You seemed to be tired in protecting me. O! Seshachalavasa! Protect me.'

His Literary Device:

Sri Vijayadasa is a great literary figure. There is a figure of speech called 'Yamaka' in Telugu literature. It means that a word will be used many times giving many connotations depending on its position in a different place. The repeated use of the word increases the beauty and charm of a poem. On seeing the grand 'darshan' of Lord Srinivasa, Sri Vijayadasa in his devotional zeal, used the word 'neeru' i.e., water in many places with different meanings.

He composed a song of five 'charanams' by using the word 'neeru' with good coordination after taking references from many significant 'puranic' works. The word 'neera' has different implications in his four expressions like 'neerera kuudadidavana,' 'neerolage sadanava bigidavana,' 'neerada syamavarnana' and 'neeraja bhava vandy.' In the first expression, he refers to Lord Krishna who is associated with the 'gopikas'. In the second expression, he refers to Lord Krishna who built Dwaraka in the middle of the ocean. In the third

expression, he talks about Lord Krishna who is in the colour of a cloud. 'Neeradamu' means the cloud. In the fourth expression, he refers to Lord Krishna who is being worshipped by Lord Brahma born in the lotus originated from His navel. He calls the Lord 'Dayasagara.'

Giving much significance to 'Yamakaalamkara,' Sri Vijayadasa describes the Lord as 'neeru paadadali pettavana.' It means that the Lord created water from His feet. It is the birth place of the Ganges. There is a mythological story in 'Harivamsam.' There was a brahmin. His four sons vanished immediately after they were born. The misery of the brahmin was indescribable. In order to remove the anguish of the brahmin, Lord Krishna crossed the Seven Oceans and went to the 'golokam' along with the brahmin and handed over them to their father. In Rama 'avatara,' Lord Rama built the 'sethu' across the ocean valiantly and suppressed the ego of 'Samudrudu' who is

called 'neerupati'. Lord Vishnu initiated the process of churning the Ocean of Milk by the gods and demons. Gracefully, He brought water to the entire world. He played in the waters as 'Matsya' and 'Kurma' as His incarnations. In Sri Vijayadasa's expression called 'neerela nariya maadidava,' 'neeru' means stone. It also means one who changed the form of a stone into a woman. The 'avatar' of Lord Rama is reflected here. Lord Vishnu is 'Neerajodarudu' as the scintillating lotus is found on His belly. Residing in the water for ever, He protects the universe. As 'Neerajapani,' He became the husband of Goddess Lakshmi. To all living beings, water is more essential than food. Sri Vijayadasa calls the Lord 'Neerajaksha Venkatadri Timma Vijaya Vittala.' In his literature, the Swami Pushkarini got immense significance. When the sage Pulasthya cursed goddess Saraswathi Devi, She had become 'Swami Pushkarini' which is superior to all lakes.

(to be contd...)

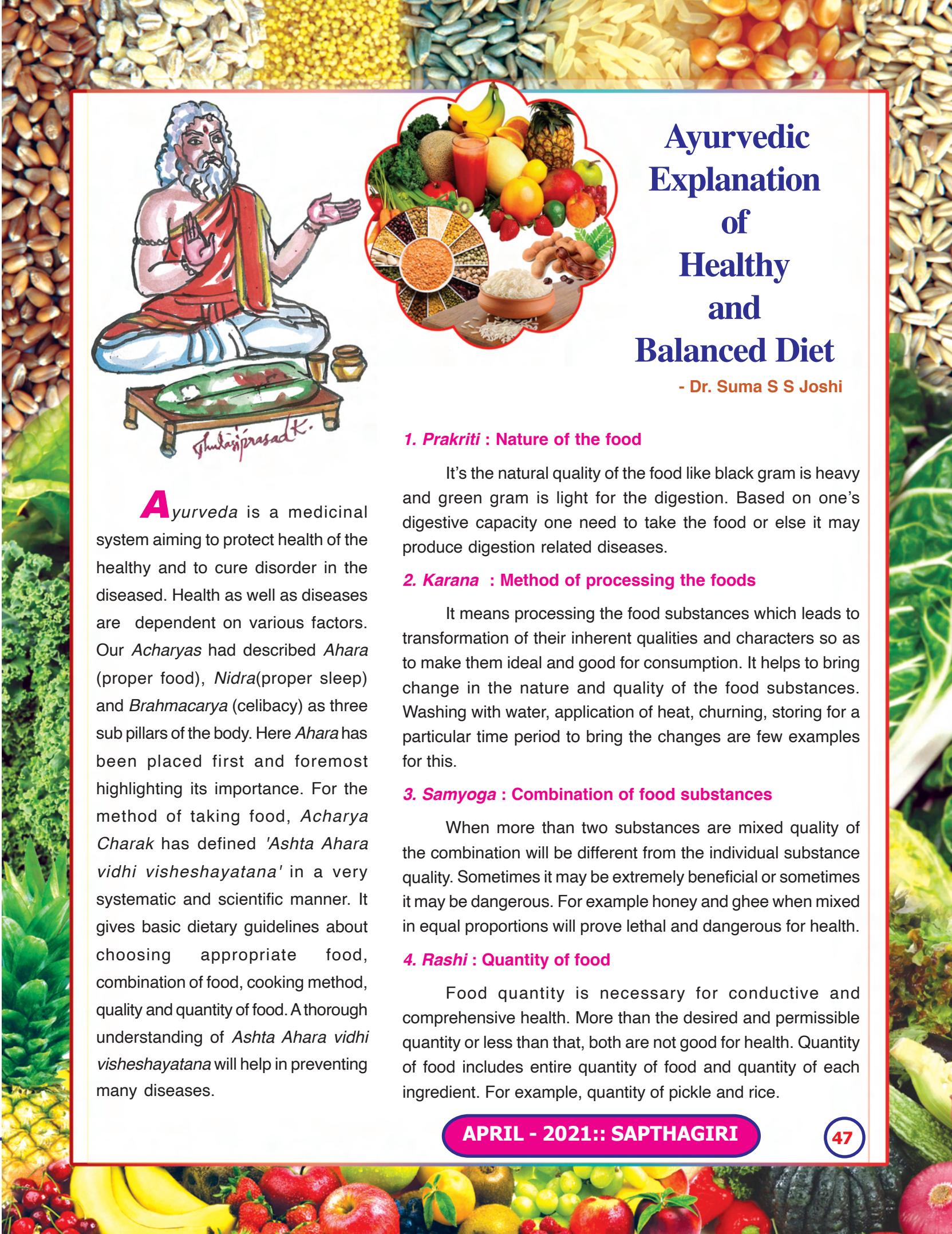
In and Around Temples and their Distance

Name of the temple



Distance of the Temple From Tirupati Railway Station

1. Sri Govindarajaswami Temple, Tirupati	1/2 Km.
2. Sri Kodandaramaswami Temple, Tirupati	1 Km.
3. Sri Kapileswaraswami Temple, Tirupati	03 Kms.
4. Sri Kalyanavenkateswaraswami Temple, Srinivasamangapuram	12 Kms.
5. Sri Padmavatidevi Temple, Tiruchanur	05 Kms.
6. Sri Kalyanavenkateswaraswami Temple, Narayananavanam	22 Kms.
7. Sri Vedanarayanaswami Temple, Nagalapuram	65 Kms.
8. Sri Prasanna Venkateswaraswami Temple, Appalayagunta	15 Kms.
9. Sri Venugopalaswami Temple, Karvetinagaram	58 Kms.
10. Sri Pattabhiramaswami Temple (Valmikipuram), Vayalpadu	100 Kms.



Ayurvedic Explanation of Healthy and Balanced Diet

- Dr. Suma S S Joshi



Ayurveda is a medicinal system aiming to protect health of the healthy and to cure disorder in the diseased. Health as well as diseases are dependent on various factors. Our Acharyas had described *Ahara* (proper food), *Nidra*(proper sleep) and *Brahmacarya* (celibacy) as three sub pillars of the body. Here *Ahara* has been placed first and foremost highlighting its importance. For the method of taking food, *Acharya Charak* has defined '*Ashta Ahara vidhi visheshayatana*' in a very systematic and scientific manner. It gives basic dietary guidelines about choosing appropriate food, combination of food, cooking method, quality and quantity of food. A thorough understanding of *Ashta Ahara vidhi visheshayatana* will help in preventing many diseases.

1. *Prakriti* : Nature of the food

It's the natural quality of the food like black gram is heavy and green gram is light for the digestion. Based on one's digestive capacity one need to take the food or else it may produce digestion related diseases.

2. *Karana* : Method of processing the foods

It means processing the food substances which leads to transformation of their inherent qualities and characters so as to make them ideal and good for consumption. It helps to bring change in the nature and quality of the food substances. Washing with water, application of heat, churning, storing for a particular time period to bring the changes are few examples for this.

3. *Samyoga* : Combination of food substances

When more than two substances are mixed quality of the combination will be different from the individual substance quality. Sometimes it may be extremely beneficial or sometimes it may be dangerous. For example honey and ghee when mixed in equal proportions will prove lethal and dangerous for health.

4. *Rashi* : Quantity of food

Food quantity is necessary for conductive and comprehensive health. More than the desired and permissible quantity or less than that, both are not good for health. Quantity of food includes entire quantity of food and quantity of each ingredient. For example, quantity of pickle and rice.

5. Desha : Place where the food items are grown or cultivated

It covers the place where the food is grown, place to which they are exported, the place where they are utilized. For example, the food or medicinal herbs grown naturally in Himalayas are said to be very potent in their properties, the food grown in desert region are light in nature.

Therefore it's necessary to understand the impact of food grown in different places and should be consumed accordingly

6. Kala : Time of consumption of food

Maintaining time table for food consumption is necessary to maintain appetite, digestion, assimilation and excretion in proper and balanced manner. It's necessary to follow certain rules for food intake, such as skipping mid-night food and changing season-wise food intake. In the disease condition one need to take such food items that expedite quick recovery. Food timings also differ with age.

7. Upayoga samstha: Dietic rules

There are certain rules and regulations for intake of food and they should be strictly followed. These rules depend on symptoms of proper digestion and they are:

- Cleanliness of belching
- Enthusiasm
- Proper evacuation of urges (like those of stools, urine flatus)ess of the body

- Manifestation of hunger

- Lightness of the body

- Manifestation of thirst

There are certain rules and regulations for food intake

- Eat hot and fresh food

- Eat unctuous food

- Eat according to proper quantity

- Eat after feeling hungry, after digestion of previously consumed food

- Eat food which is not contradictory in potency

- Eat in a desired place with desired articles

- Do not eat in a hurry

- Do not eat very slowly

- Eat with utmost concentration without talking or laughing

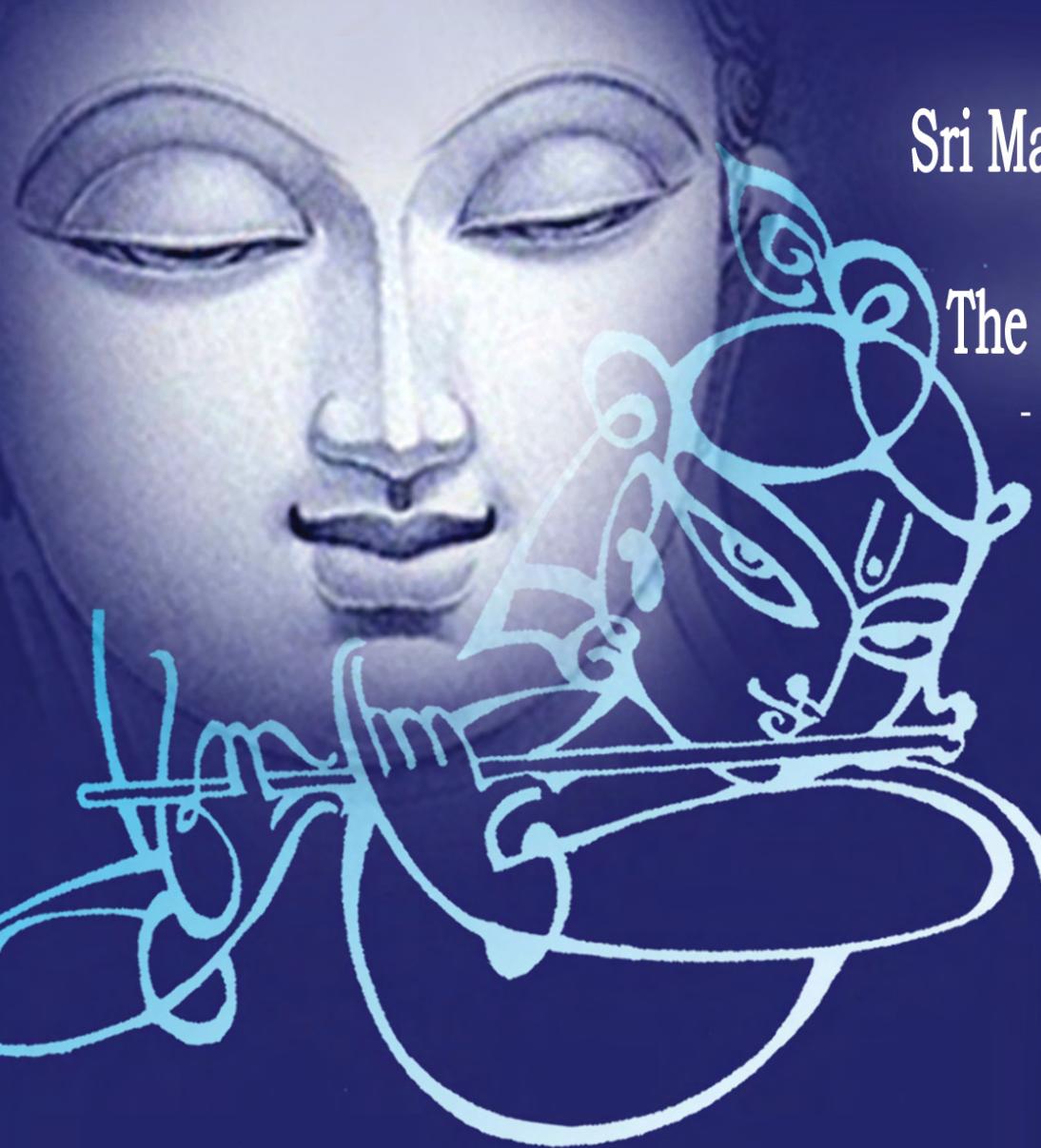
- Eat after self-analysis

8. Upabhokta/ Upayokta: The person who consumes food

The person who takes the food as a regular habit, at right times, in proper quality and quantity.

In conclusion, these conditions which plays a major role in selection and intake of our food, help us to know about the wholesomeness of food and also the foods we need to take, the quantity, quality and combination of different foods, the place and time related to food and the rules to be followed while consuming foods. Therefore, it becomes very important for everyone to know these conditions thoroughly.





Sri Mahabhagavatham and The Human Drama

- Sri T.Viswanadha Rao

king ,is no other than his ahamkara. Garlanding the sage with a serpent returns to him in a more deadly form, claiming his life in the form of a serpent biting him.

The story of the unborn Parikshit, still in the womb of his mother who looks to all the directions around him only to find Narayana fully armed, betokens or symbolises the fact that a staunch seeker or sadhaka, constantly in the quest of the divine, is not only protected by him but is also able to witness him. In the Bhagavadgeeta Lord Krishna classifies people who worship him into four categories- 'artho jigyasu rarthathee jyaneecha'-one in peril, one who is inquisitive (to know the divine), one desirous of wealth, and one who is a realised soul. Note that the one in danger and who cries for help ('arta'), tops the list. Surprisingly though, the lord takes ready notice or cognisance of the one in peril and acts immediately as he does in the case of the elephant king- Gajendra, in the justly renowned Gajendra

Lord Krishna is a 'Leelamanusha vigraha'. He creates forms for his sport, sustains them or withdraws them at his will. The Vedas do not speak of his various births as they appear to be nor do they ascribe actions or deeds to him. While being not associated with the cycle of birth and rebirth, he however dwells or abides in the heart of every human being. Capable of more manifestations than one, he is the Director ('Sutradhara') of the cosmic drama ('Jagannataka').

In his infinite mercy, God creates possibilities for the upliftment of people. In kaliyuga, ordinary people are lethargic, ignorant and short lived. Besides they suffer from malignant diseases. What possibly could save them from a predicament? Many of the sub-narratives or 'upapakhyanas' of the Mahabhagavatha purana are suggestive and allegorical. Ego or ahamkara is man's chief enemy. 'Pride goeth before a fall', they say, and these stories illustrate the harmful consequences of bloated ego .Even great people become victims of ego momentarily but they reap the consequences for a life time and even beyond. Parikshit is a noble emperor and righteous to the core, but ego or ahamkara which visits everyone and spares none, captures him too. He loses his balance and in a moment of fury, does what such people do not usually resort to. He garlands the sage in front of him, while he is in his deep meditation, with a dead serpent, but the greater serpent that bites the

Moksham. The pleas of the one in peril are charged with a sense of urgency and helplessness, also a sense of extraordinary insecurity. God is ready to answer such appeals with an intensity directly proportional to or matching with the intensity of the seeker of his help. One in distress goes on calling on the divine to save him. The divine feels obliged to reward such intensity. Calling on the name of god at any moment is sure to produce the desired result. If one touches fire, is he not likely to be burnt?

The story where Aswatthama slaughters the upapandavas is an illustration of an unprecedented tragedy. But what is remarkable about the story is the fortitude of Draupadi who does not crave for revenge of her murdered children. When Drona's son Aswatthama is brought before her by Arjuna, she only expresses her sorrow at what he had done and administers what might be described as a mild rebuke. She says to him that all the pandavas are the disciples of Drona his father and he himself is Drona in another shape, the shape of his son ('atmavai putramasasi'). How could he ever think of slaughtering or butchering the sons of Drona's students, she wonders. Besides he is by birth, known for a sattvic and tolerant attitude, a brahmin. He should therefore have not resorted to a demoniac or dastardly act like the one he perpetrated, like killing the slumbering infants. They are not armed and do not intend any harm to his person. How did his hands agree to do this, she wonders. Your mother, she adds, would weep bitterly, if she knows that you are dragged to this place by Arjuna. Finally she pleads with Krishna and Arjuna not to harm Aswatthama. So instead of harming him physically, Aswatthama is let off with a shaven head. On the other hand, take the episode of the aftermath of the nirvana or final departure of lord Krishna from our world. Arjuna who knows Krishna as Narayana incarnate, weeps for the loss of Krishna like an ordinary human being. On many other occasions, Arjuna knows his strength which is at any time, more than human. But once while on the battlefield of Kurukshetra just before the mighty war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, he suddenly loses his nerve and here again, unable to face the departure of lord Krishna, knowing fully well that the lord has decided to leave for his original abode, having completed the task of his incarnation, weeps bitterly, shaken like an ordinary mortal. Krishna has been his friend, philosopher and guide and that's what he says to Dharma-raja, when he goes to report to the latter, the nirvana or withdrawal from the mundane world, of Krishna, Narayana incarnate.

The Mahabharata purana affords many instances where the super humans descend to the level of the human, appearing to forget momentarily, their divine attributes. This happens to no less than lord Krishna himself who is ready to go to kill Bhishma, forgetting his promise not to fight in the war, but only make Arjuna fight, giving him such advice as might be appropriate from time to time ('nimitta matrambhava savyasachi'). The whole episode is a paradigm of a sublime human drama. Bhishma notices that Krishna, angered with the discomfiture of Arjuna with the suffocating belligerence of Bhishma in the battle, rushes to jump into the battle, to finish him with his Sudarshana chakra. But the powerful warrior Bhishma is unperturbed and instead of getting angry, praises Krishna and invites Krishna to kill him. Nothing more would have been welcome to him as that would amount to attaining salvation at the hands of Lord Krishna himself !He therefore praises him in the most sublime words, chosen spontaneously for the occasion. When Krishna jumps from the chariot to the ground in great rush, the sheen of the Lord's earrings envelops the entire sky, the whole universe which his belly holds, experiences a tremor, and while holding the disc or Sudarshana chakra in a battle-ready mood, the golden-coloured upper garment of his, slips away from his shoulders, a fact which Krishna hardly notices. Arjuna pleads with Krishna not to rush, as he has faith in the former's competence in war. He adds that people will mock at him if Krishna, contrary to his resolve, participate in the battle. Bhishma praises the Lord, comparing him to a lion who plunges to kill an elephant. 'Welcome, O Lord', says Bhishma, 'I take refuge in you who wish to rush towards the profuse shower of my arrows and finish me'! What a graphic and picturesque description! Here are only three characters, but the resulting human drama is of cosmic proportions! On one side there is Lord Krishna, the Lord in a human form, descending and pretending to behave almost like a human being as a part of his 'leela' or divine sport! On the other side, there is Arjuna, worried for at least two reasons, namely the Lord should not break his resolve not to fight or participate in the battle, directly and his human weakness of not allowing his reputation as a warrior, to suffer. This happens all of a sudden, a momentary lapse being luckily prevented for two reasons-Arjuna's plea and Bhishma's devout subjection to the supreme. This puts a stop to the flash of divine action and averts what might have been a disaster ethically, if one might describe it in human terms. A few such illustrations, it is hoped, serve the purpose of introduction to the large subject.



Yakshagana! Even the very word brings to mind the beautiful costumes in colours like black, red and gold. The powerful dialogues and the wonderful music, dance and drama make us feel as if scenes from the epics are actually happening in front of our eyes. But who was the creator of Yakshagana?

Narahari Tirtha, a disciple of the Vaishnavaite saint Madhvacharya, is regarded as the founder of Yakshagana. Narahari Tirtha was originally known as Syama Shastri. He lived in the Kalinga region in the East coast of India about eight hundred years ago. He mastered the shastras at a young age and was considered a leading scholar. Eventually, he became a minister in the Kalinga kingdom. This was at a time when Madhvacharya was going around the land teaching and giving discourses. Syama Shastri became his disciple, and from then on, was known as Narahari Tirtha.

Narahari Tirtha spent a large part of his life in the Kalinga region (present Odisha and Andhra Pradesh). In fact, he made Srikrumam an important centre of Vaishnavism and built the Yogananda Narasimha temple there. He is even said to have helped defend Srikrumam from attacks.

He was also active in Simhachalam near Vishakapatnam and helped making the Simhachalam temple into a famous educational establishment. There are inscriptions about Narahari Tirtha in the Srikrumam and Simhachalam temples. It is said that in addition to being a minister of the Kalinga kingdom, he served as regent for some years. But he is most well-known for

spreading Bhakti as a disciple of Madhvacharya, and for helping the organisation of the temple administration systems. His brindavana is on the banks of the river Tungabhadra.

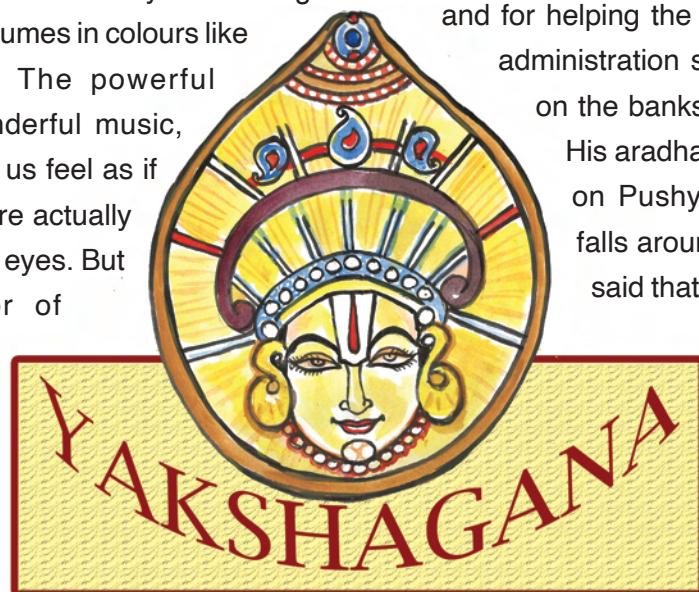
His aradhana is traditionally observed on Pushya Bahula Saptami, which falls around January every year. It is said that Narahari Tirtha's approach to life is the perfect combination of bhakti (devotion) and gnana (knowledge).

Narahari Tirtha was known for teaching and spreading Bhagavata Dharma in many ways. It

is said that his speeches were very dramatic and enjoyable to listen to. He wrote stotras and songs, of which some have survived and are known even today. Narahari Tirtha was also inspired by Madhvacharya to popularise the newly started Hari dasakuta movement.

Of course, he created Yakshagana which is a form of theatre that is popular in and around Karnataka even today. In fact, Yakshagana has its own form of music and famous poets such as Muddana have written Yakshaganas. Each Yakshagana session can run for an entire night, and the stories are usually from the Bhagavatam, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and other epics. There are inscriptions in some temples in Karnataka and also a few writings and manuscripts that describe Yakshagana.

Children, let us remember the story of Narahari Tirtha whenever we watch a Yakshagana performance and try to learn more about him and encourage the wonderful theatre form that he created.



- Ms. D.K. Mythili



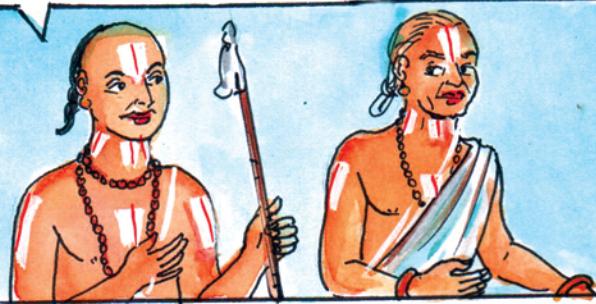
In a village called Tirukottiyur, there was a great scholar. His name was Sri Goshti Purna. Sri Ramanuja went to the scholar with the command of his 'Guru' Sri Periya Nambi.

'O! Acharya! I am your servant. Could you please teach me Thirumantra?'

Sri Goshti Purna turned his face reluctantly.

'O! Acharya! Sri Periya Nambi sent me to meet you.'

'It is all right!'



Sri Ramanuja continued to visit him many times but his visit became futile.

'I would like to see how much interest and yearning you have in this regard.'

Yes please.

He went to Sri Goshti Purna seventeen times for the instruction of the 'mantra' but he failed to get it. He was very much disappointed.

I don't have luck to learn the 'mantra'.

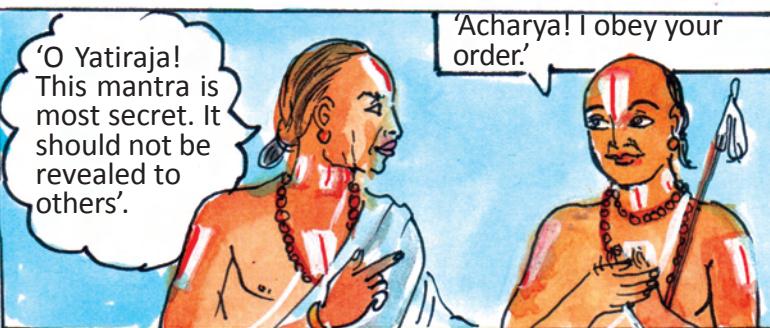
'O! Acharya! Don't be disappointed.'



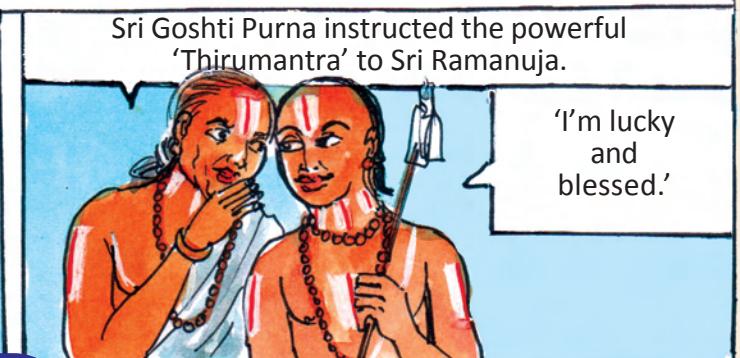
One day Sri Goshti Purna sent his disciple for Sri Ramanuja to instruct 'Thirumantra.' This is the eighteenth time for Sri Ramanuja to see Sri Goshti Purna.

Don't reveal this mantra at any circumstances.

Ok Swami.



'Acharya! I obey your order.'



Sri Goshti Purna instructed the powerful 'Thirumantra' to Sri Ramanuja.

After getting the 'upadesa,' he thought deeply that the welfare of the world is more important than mere personal selfishness. For his noble thought, his disciples appreciated him.

'I will instruct this 'mantra' to those who are in great distress and it will give them salvation.'



'Acharya! Your decision is great.'



Sri Ramanuja climbed the temple 'gopuram' immediately and summoned all the people there. He instructed the powerful "Ashtaksharimantra" i.e., 'Om Namo Narayanaya!' to them.

'Om Namo Narayanaya!'

'Om Namo Narayanaya!'



Knowing this, Sri Goshtipurna got angry and admonished Sriramanuja for revealing the mantra to others.

'Yathiraja! You have not followed my command. You will go to hell. It is inevitable.'



O Gurudeva, I do not bother about it. I will be happy if all the people get salvation.



After listening the words of Sriramanuja, Sri Goshtipurna said...

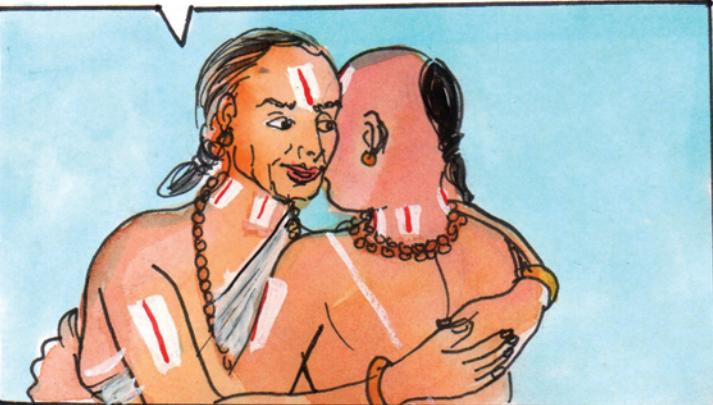
O! Yatiraja! Your generosity is great and your sacrifice is unique.

O! Acharya! This is possible only because of your blessings.

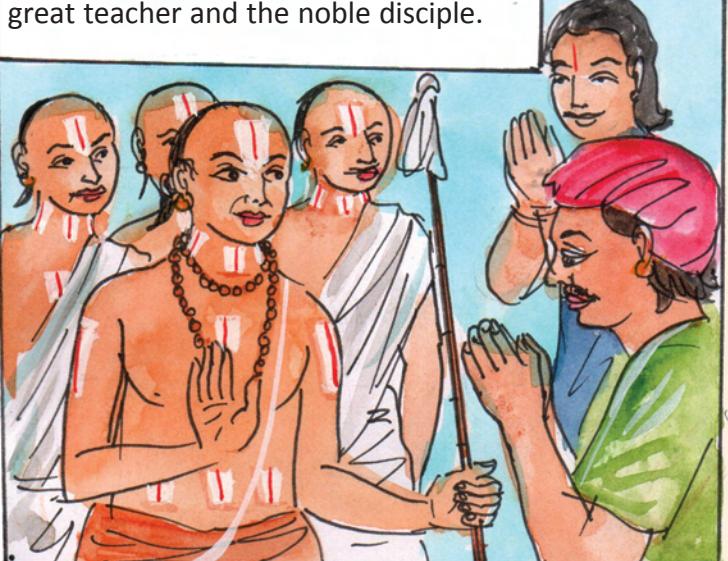


Sri Goshti Purna embraced Sriramanuja happily.

Sri Goshti Purna bestowed the name 'Emperumanar' to him.



The entire world prostrated before the great teacher and the noble disciple.



Quiz

1. Which is NOT the name of a Yug related to Vedic Scriptures:

- A. SAATVIK YUG
- B. TRETA YUG
- C. SATYA YUG
- D. DWAPAR YUG

ANSWER: A. SATVIK YUG

2. Name the Queens of King Dashrath.

ANSWER: Kaushalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi.

3. Match the words in Column A with the Column B:

A

RAAVAN
SRIKRISHNA
BHEEMA
SRIRAM
DHRONA
BALI

B

ANGADA
GHATOTKACHA
SITA
ASHWATHTHAMA
MEGHANADA
PRADYUMNA

BAALI
ANGADA
ASHWATHTHAMA
SITA
GHATOTKACHA
PRADYUMNA
MEGHANADA
SRIRAM
BHEEMA
DHRONA
SRIKRISHNA
RAAVAN

Corrected Series:

4. Unjumble the words in this Mantra : “**GAYATRI MANTRA**”

Aum Bhur, Tat Savitur Varenyam Dhimahi, Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayat, Bhuvah Swah Bhargo Devasya.

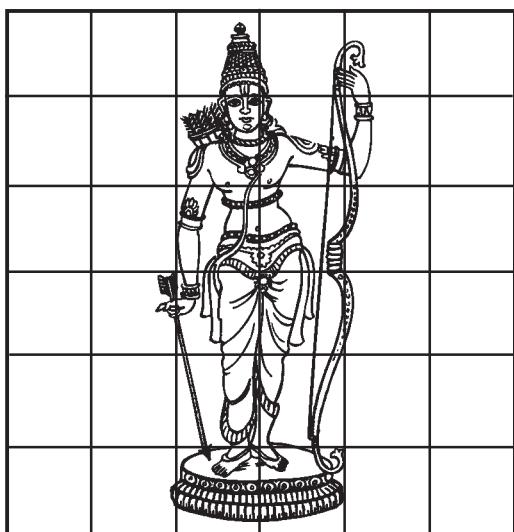
Corrected Version :
Aum Bhur, Bhuvah Swah Tat Savitur Varenyam Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi, Dhiyo Yo Nah Prachodayat.

5. Different Names of the Brother of Lord Ganapati

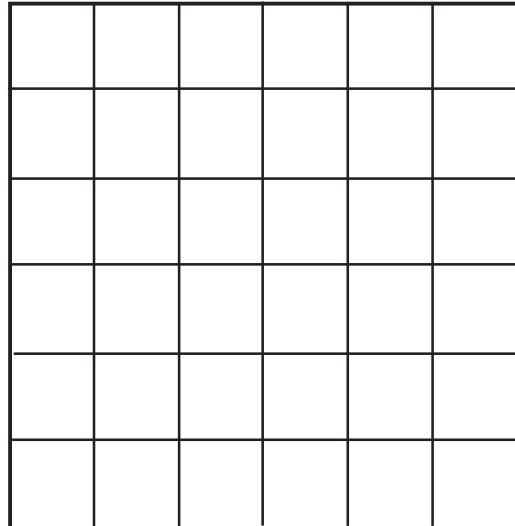
ANSWER: Kartikeya / Skanda / Murugan / Kumarswami / Subramanya (All Names of Same Deity)

DRAWING

Colour the Picture



Draw the Picture as given



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS



'Phalguni Lakshmi Vaibhavam' programme was conducted on the auspicious occasion of Sri Lakshmi Jayanthi with religious fervour for the welfare of the society in the premises of the TTD Administrative Building grounds in Tirupati on 28.03.2021.



